PATHFINDER COMPATIBLE
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Devabhumi

Campaign Setting

CREDITS

Designer and Lead Writer: Khanjan Patel

Contributing Writer: Stephen Sewell

Editor: Riaz Ahmad

Cultural Consultants: Vipin Kumar, Wazahat Ahmed Bhat

Cover Illustrator: Allan Damaso, Yassine Sey

Interior Illustrators: Allan Damaso, Alessia Fiorenz, Dibyo Shree, John Brissenden, John Ric Detoon, Mariami K., Marlon Felipe Ruiz

Cartographer: Silver Compass Maps

Music Composers: RPG Audio Vault, Mihu P.

Special Thanks to my Superbackers: Alex Welford, Chris, Dena Strong, Jeramy Webb, Jon, Jonathan, K.P. Upadhyayula, Kunaal Bajwa, Louis, MC, Miron Arljung, Monroe, Naomi Chow, Nicole Bailey, Rexcalibur, Russel C, Shangheists, Smriti Gupta, Stefan Huddleston, Steven Cowan, Supriya, Tom Olien

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To Netra – my Mummi

Preface

"Heroes are not born, they are made. And today, you become one."
– Aru Shah and the End of Time

This book is not meant to portray or represent Indian culture. It blends certain parts of Indian culture with fantastical elements to create a unique world full of magic and adventure. Do not take the content of this setting as a reflection of Indian culture or the Hindu religion. Recommendations for reading about Ancient India are listed in the selected bibliography at the end of the book.

The land that lies south of the towering Himalayas is a place full of diverse people and cultures–a land of gods and heroes. It is a place with scorching deserts, freezing mountaintops, flat plains, and humid jungles. It is easy to view the land that composes modern South Asia as a monolith, but that is far from reality. This land that more than a billion people call home is dotted with more than 22 different languages and thousands of ethnic groups and cultures.

Compiling all these cultures and beliefs into one single study would be an impossible task. That is why there are hundreds of studies and degrees on just one of these many cultures and beliefs. Just like a painting requires multiple strokes of different colors and hues, this book takes a little bit from each culture, region, and story to form something captures the essence of the South Asian subcontinent.

Through these pages, you will encounter stories inspired by great epics such as the *Mahabharata* or *Ramayana*, where gods and heroes work hand-in-hand to defeat evil. You will explore different nations, factions, and political powers, each vying for power in their own unique way. You will walk through cities with magical palaces, lush gardens, and bustling streets.

I hope this book provides you with material that you can use in your campaigns. The aim of this material is to not only provide content that you can use as it is, but to also provide inspiration for you to create new ideas. I hope you enjoy the land of Devabhumi.

- Khanjan Patel

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Welcome to Devabhumi

A lone hero wanders through the treacherous ice on top of a mountain in order to meet an elusive god. If the hero finds the god, he will receive a powerful boon that will threaten the stability of all nations. A party of young adventurers stumbles across a powerful sage meditating in the jungle. If they disturb the sage's meditation, they will receive a curse that will haunt them for the rest of their lives. A group of explorers cut their way into the jungle in search of a city built of jewels. On their way, they come across unknown ruins that are inhabited by a colony of Vaanars—the legendary talking monkeys that have only been described in stories!

The Land of Devabhumi is a distant place nestled in between the sea and sky-scraping mountains. It is a land where gods and mortals live together, boons and curses change the destiny of its inhabitants, and senses are easily overpowered by the diversity of the landscape. Magic is elusive, but it still dots the land, presenting itself as brief but powerful energy that is tucked away from the grasp of most mortals. Those who are able to channel this magic are rare and are called Jadugars, or spellcasters. These Jadugars use the help of magic to build towering palaces, crystal forests, and magical chariots that ride through the plains.

Heroes come from all regions of the land, seeking something greater than that which was offered to them. They wander the land, seeking gods for their boons, battling rakshasas, aiding powerful Rajas and Ranis, and exploring frozen peaks that may hold the key to immortality.

Devabhumi is a fantasy setting with a focus on exploration and mystery, allowing heroes to stumble upon ancient riches and great power...or stumble into the jaws of death. Shifting powers cause instability throughout the land, which creates opportunity. Elusive gods try to shape the course of events to their benefit, hidden rakshasas seek to spread their corruption, and the greed of mortals places the land in constant threat. Who will come out on top— not even the gods know.

TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Astra (us-trah): a powerful divine-imbued weapon with the ability to destroy entire settlements at once.

Ashram (ash-rum): a private monastery or school that can teach religion, science, magic, and warfare.

Deva (deh-vah): a male god

Devi (deh-vih): a female goddess

Dharma: the innate duty of all sentient creatures. The dharma of an individual depends on one's age, class, and background in society.

Ghat (ghut): Stone steps leading down into a river or lake for bathing.

Guru: a spiritual teacher that instructs one in dharma, religious texts, and sometimes the knowledge of magic and war.

Kalachakra (ka-lah-chak-rah): the rotating wheel that symbolizes the cyclical nature of time.

Karma: the natural consequences that arise as a result of one's actions. These consequences can be positive or negative.

Moksha: a release from the cycle of birth a that plagues all souls

Puja: an elaborate worship ritual that always requires a fire and a sacrifice. Different gods have different pujas, but these two elements are always present.

Raja: a king or a prince. This word follows the name of the individual. For example, King Bharat would be called Bharat Raja.

Rani: a queen or a princess. This word follows the name of the individual. For example, Queen Radha would be called Radha Rani.

Samsara (sum-sah-rah): the cycle of birth and rebirth. One's accumulated karma can affect the quality of the next life.

Tridevi (tree-deh-vih): three chief goddesses that accompany the Trimurti

Trimurti (tree-mur-tih): three chief gods that are at the head of the Indic pantheon

The History of Devabhumi

Time in Devabhumi is viewed as cyclical. There is no set beginning or end, there are only cycles. As one stage begins, another stage comes to an end. This is the natural order of all things. There is no omnipotent force that directly controls this cosmological cycle. Even the gods are part of this infinite rotating wheel—the **Kalachakra** (wheel of time).

As a result, there is no creation story for the world. However, there are stories about the current state of the land, its nations, and its people. These stories can explain the emergence of different tribes, the occurrence of cataclysmic events, and the pockets of magic that are scattered throughout the land. In order to understand these stories, we must first understand the Four Ages.

THE FOUR AGES

In the cycle of time, there are four main **yugas** (ages). Each age lasts roughly four million years. Although each age contains the same amount of time, not all ages are equal in quality. As the world moves on from age to age, there is a progressive weakening of life, and a loss of vitality amongst living beings. At the end of the fourth age, there is a cataclysmic event that leads to the destruction of the world and the creation of a new world. This is the dharmic cycle.

Satya Yuga *(the age of truth, the golden age)*: This is the first and highest of the yugas. During this age, the gods walked among mortals in the world, working together to cultivate life, prosperity, and artistic endeavors.

In this age, there was a focus on knowledge, meditation, and self-fulfillment. There was no need to build grand temples to the gods because they lived in the world with mortals. This age was marked by an elegant simplicity. People lived in simple but beautiful homes adorned with various flowers, vines, and other pleasant-smelling fauna. Divine-imbued magic dominated the landscape, leaving subtle but beautiful effects on the world. For example, the soil was soft, crops were sweet and bountiful, birds chirped beautiful tunes, and flowers gave off euphoric scents.

Despite the predominance of virtue in this age, there was still evil abound. This evil manifested subtly, as whispers. Asuras (demons) took the form of birds, insects, and small mammals. In these forms, they would infiltrate society and influence mortals to commit evil. As mortals chose to go against dharma, these demons would grow in power. If a demon grew too powerful, it would raise the attention of a god, who would subsequently slay the demon. Thus, the cycle of good and evil remained intact, even in the age of truth.

> "Men neither bought nor sold; there were no poor and no rich; there was no need to labor, because all that men required was obtained by the power of will; the chief virtue was the abandonment of all worldly desires. All men were blessed by the gods. - *The Book of the Forest*, on the Satya Yuga.

Treta Yuga *(the silver age)*: This is the second yuga, which is marked by the development of kingdoms, division of labor, and the rise of ambitious kings and queens. People started to build large towns, wealthy cities, and grand temples. In this age, people walked a fine line between worldly desires and spiritual virtues. A determined prince may advance his armies into foreign wars while still honoring the gods with yagnas (sacrifices).

The magic that paints the world started to fade, giving rise to deserts and wastelands. The gods still walked among mortals, but they retreated into the forest and caves, taking their knowledge with them.

Demonic forces gained more power in this age, as they started to resort to outright violence and slaughter to achieve their goals. Despite the general weakening of living creatures, this age still retained many positive attributes from the Satya Yuga. Food was still bountiful, disease and famine were unknown, and the lifespan of mortal creatures was long.

Dvapara Yuga *(the bronze age)*: This is the third age in the dharmic cycle. In this age, there is a marked decrease in piety and a stark increase in chaos and lawlessness. Creatures become much more competitive and start to hoard resources, leading to wars and feuds. Humans continue to develop technology and science, leading to new technologies, unique schools of magic, and the discovery of new lands.

Although destructive tendencies become more common amongst the population, they still retain a desire for spiritual advancement and moksha. The gods still walk the world, but shrink away even farther from human civilization. Only in rare instances do they interact with rulers and warriors, preferring to share their knowledge with learned sages instead.

Disease, famine, and natural disasters emerge in this age, although rare. Inequality becomes common, which leads to envy and selfishness.

Demonic forces grow bold and reveal their true forms at certain instances. Small groups of humans form cults that worship various demons, hoping for material gain. Asuras begin to work together and form their own kingdoms, warring with humans and other races. The end of the Dvapara Yuga is marked by the gods leaving the world. If the Asuras manage to conquer the land of Devabhumi, it will bring forth the Kali-Yuga.

Kali Yuga *(the Iron Age, the age of darkness)*: This is the fourth and final age of the dharmic cycle, which ends with a cataclysmic event and the destruction of the world. This age will be marked by conflict, unchecked ambition, and the greed of mortals. As a result, technological development and progression will be halted. Many of the discoveries made in the Dvapara Yuga will be forgotten, only known to solitary sages.

War will be constant, famines plentiful, and survival will become difficult. Many cities will be burned down, homes destroyed, and civilizations wiped out. Despite this destruction, mortals will continue to multiply and ruin the land with their greed and ambition.

Demonic forces will be at their strongest in this age. Although outright worship of demons will be rare, demonic influence will be very common. Demonic kingdoms will dominate most, if not all, of the landscape. Large empires will form, leading to draconian rulers and oppressive laws. Pious kings and queens will become rare, as power will inevitably corrupt people in this age.

The gods will still reward their worshippers in this age, but they will not directly involve themselves in the squabbles of mortals. Near the end of the Kali Yuga, the god Kalki will incarnate in the world and destroy it completely, saving only the pious. Once the world is destroyed, a new world is created and the dharmic cycle is reset, starting with the Satya Yuga.

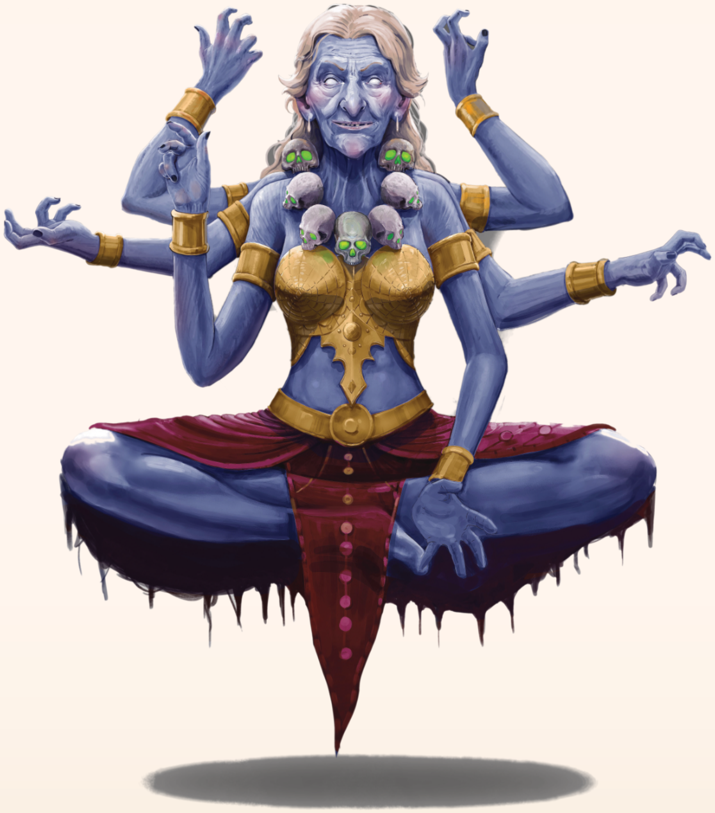
The events of this book occur in the Dvapara Yuga, but many elements can be adapted to fit the other three yugas as well.

History of this Age

Two and a half million years have passed in the Dvapara Yuga, which marks more than halfway in the progression of this bronze age. The earth is still fresh with wounds from the great war known as the **Mahabharata**, which occurred nearly a thousand years ago. This war began as a succession dispute between two northern ruling dynasties - the Kurus and the Pandavas. This war lasted for only eighteen days, with many powerful Astras being used by both sides, causing regional devastation.

In the end, the Pandavas emerged victorious, but the war claimed the lives of most of their subjects and their kingdom was now crumbling. A total of two million people were killed in the war, leaving behind many ruins of formerly great cities and fortresses.

While much of Northern Devabhumi is in ruins, the Southern settlements are flourishing. Powerful Rajas and Ranis rule over individual city-states, as is the norm in Devabhumi, and their coffers grow large with trade. This instability has allowed scheming Asuras to grow their power and influence in the land, as they now command a handful of human settlements on the western coast.



Maladhari by Allan Damaso

The Rise of the Asura Queen

The end of the Treta Yuga heralded many natural calamities. One of which involved the great Saraswati River, which flowed southwest from the icy peaks of the Aakashparvat Mountains and emptied into the Purvabhaga Gulf on the west coast. Within a few decades of the advent of the Treta Yuga, this great river that sustained millions of lives dried up, leaving behind a vast desert.

Many settlements that were built along the river suffered widespread drought and famine, causing the inhabitants to flee to the coastal cities on the west. Gangs of thugs and bandits took advantage of this desperate condition, robbing people and looting homes. With great difficulty, the refugees made their way to the west.

One particular coastal city—**Khara**—swelled with hundreds of thousands of refugees. The resources of Khara dwindled and a great conflict arose. The city descended to a state of rioting for weeks until an opportunistic asura named **Maladhari** brought order to the city. With an army of a few thousand asuras under her command, the sly asura stormed the gates of Khara and ousted the ruling family from their palace. She ruled with an iron fist, bringing an end to the violence, with a cost...This city served as a springboard for a quick succession of annexations of surrounding cities.

Maladhari now commands four major cities on the west coast of Devabhumi. The many rajas and ranis of surrounding areas are worried, rightfully so. Maladhari has gotten a taste of power and will not stop anytime soon. Those that have seen the Asura Queen say that she resembles a terrifying old woman. With wrinkled gray skin, six strong arms, a neck decorated with a garland of skulls, and a head of wiry white hair, it is understandable why Maladhari evokes such strong feelings of terror. It is rumored that she is on a quest to grow in power and assume her rakshasi form.

According to sages, if Maladhari gains complete control over Devabhumi, it will herald the coming of the feared Kali Yuga. This would lead to the loss of life on a grand scale, along with cataclysmic disasters that would surely bring an end to the world.

Notable Characters from the Mahabharata:

With the Mahabharata war fresh on the people's minds, there are constant stories and references to heroes that were present during this conflict. Listed below are the most popular.

Ashwatthama: An infamous warrior who fought on the Kuru side, he was cursed with painful immortality for attempting to kill the grandchild of Arjuna. His curse would only end at the end of the Kali Yuga.

Arjuna: The famed archer who fought on the side of the Pandavas, responsible for slaying many powerful warriors. Arjuna's chariot was piloted by Krishna, who desired to remain neutral during the war.

Bheema: A warrior that fought with the Pandavas that was known for his sheer strength. He was the younger brother of King Yudhistira and slayed Duryodhana by breaking his hips with a gada (two-handed mace).

Bhishma: The powerful general of the Kurus, Bhishma had the power to determine when he would die. After Arjuna trapped him on a bed of arrows, Bhishma voluntarily died after fifty-one days.

Duryodhana: The crown prince of the Kurus, Duryodhana was exceptionally cunning and powerful. He was immortal from the waist up, and as a result was slayed by a strike to the hips.

Karna: A warrior that fought on the side of the Kurus, Karna was the scion of the sun god Surya. He was the only one able to match the prowess of Arjuna with the bow. He was killed by Arjuna through trickery.

Krishna: An incarnation of Vishnu, Krishna was the charioteer of Arjuna, and promised to remain neutral during the war. At one point, after being aroused to anger, Krishna almost killed Bhishma with a chariot wheel. But Arjuna stepped in and reminded Krishna of his promise to remain neutral.

CALENDAR

The calendar of Devabhumi is measured with reference to the Mahabharata. It has been 1,044 years since the great war ended, so the current year is marked as 1,044 N.S. This acronym stands for Nave Sal, which means new year.

If one wishes to refer to a time period that occurred before the Mahabharata, it is marked as Pehle Sal, P.S., which means previous years. An event that occurred 1,000 years before the Mahabharara is marked as 1,000 P.S.

There are 12 total months in the Indic calendar, and much like the Gregorian calendar, each month has 30 or 31 days. The Indic calendar is a lunar calendar, with each month starting on a full moon. The names for the months are below.

1. Chaitra	2. Vaisakha
3. Jyaistha	4. Asadha
5. Sravana	6. Bhadrapana
7. Asvina	8. Kartikka
9. Margasirsa	10. Pausa
11. Magha	12. Phalguna

SEASONS

Devabhumi is a hot subcontinent with searing summers and long days. The only exception is the Aakashparvat Mountains, which are covered with a thick layer of ice. In general, there are three main seasons in Devabhumi— winter, summer, and the monsoon season. Winter is relatively short, lasting from Magha (11th month) to Vaisakha (2nd month). Summer lasts from Jyaistha (3rd month) to Asvina (7th month). The monsoon season starts in mid-Asvina and lasts until Pausa (10th month).

Since Devabhumi is a subcontinent spanning tens of thousands of miles, there is plenty of variation in the climate of different regions. Northwest Devabhumi is hot and arid, owing to the vast Kavacha Desert. Eastern and Southern Devabhumi is quite humid, allowing for a luscious growth of jungles. The central heartlands are flat and temperate, bearing no great extreme of either temperature. However, all regions of Devabhumi must bear the dreaded monsoon season, during which torrential rain and thunderstorms cause flash floods that wash away entire villages. Coastal settlements must contend with tropical cyclones that can drown a whole city. Northern towns must also deal with massive landslides that have been known to kill hundreds at a time.

REALMS

There are three realms (or lokas), which are separate from the planes of existence, that are home to magical beings and strange landscapes. These realms can be better understood as planets, where there is a physical means of entry and exit. Some planets lie above ours, some are below. The most common way to enter a realm is to be reborn as a creature in that realm, but occasionally a powerful mortal may breach the gates and enter a realm. The realm in which the events of this book take place is **Bhuloka**, which contains the subcontinent of Devabhumi along with all of its kingdoms, ruins, and history.

Svargaloka, or Svarga, contains the heavens with all the gods, their heavenly consorts, and the souls of people who were immensely devoted and pious. Each god has their own kingdom within Svarga, which is adorned with palaces, gardens, and landscapes of the god's taste. The name of these kingdoms is usually the god's name plus the suffix "loka." For example, Indra's kingdom would be called Indraloka.

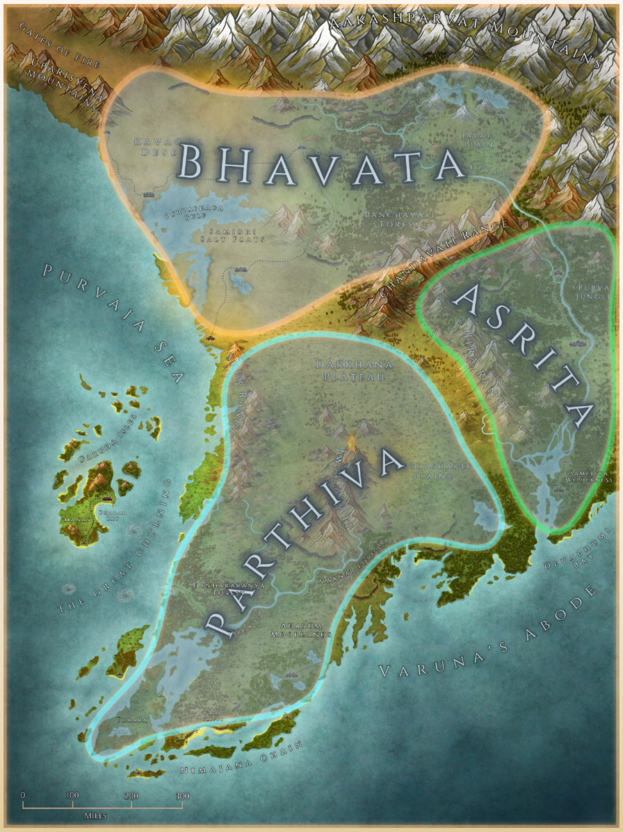
Patala is a realm immersed in darkness. It is described as more beautiful than Svarga, but since it is shrouded in darkness, much of the beauty is not seen. It is a home of Asuras, Nagas, and the souls of people who committed grave and evil deeds in their lives. Patala is further divided into regions for each creature. Asuraloka is home to tribes of fragmented Asuras, plotting their entry into Bhuloka. Nagaloka is home to a large kingdom of Nagas, ruled by King Vasuki. Naraka is home to countless suffering souls, overseen by Yamaraj and released back into Bhuloka once their suffering is complete.

The People of Devabhumi

The inhabitants of Devabhumi identify themselves as the **Devavasi**, or simply Vasi, which translates to “dwellers.” Similarly, Devabhumi itself is often referred to as Bhumi, translating to “land.” The native culture of Devabhumi is referred to as the Indic culture. The predominant language, pantheon, and customs of the region can all be classified as Indic. Indic culture is an umbrella-term for all the smaller subcultures scattered throughout Devabhumi.

The predominant people of the northern reaches, western deserts, and central heartlands are the **Bhavata**. The predominant people and culture of the numerous coastal settlements of the south is known as **Parthiva**. The culture and people in the luscious jungles of the East are referred to as the **Asrita**. These cultures share similarities in their view of the world, the gods, and the laws of Karma and Dharma, but other aspects such as society, government, and lifestyle are unique to each culture. These groups are cultures and not races. Greater detail about these cultures are provided in the Nations chapter.

There are also the **Zhav**, a tribe of nomadic herdsmen that wander the lands of Devabhumi, not belonging to any particular culture. They have their own culture that is distinct from the rest, and pick up smaller elements of other cultures where they see fit.


Aakashparvat Mountains
Gates of Fire
Uparisyena Mountains
Kavacha Desert
BHAVATA
Jayati Plain
Devapani
Purvabhaga Gulf
Samidri Salt Flats
Panchavati Forest
Chandavati Range
Purvaja Sea
ASRITA
Purva Jungle
Hira Range
Dakkhana Plateau
Garuda Isles
Manas
Dharam Bay
PARTHIVA
Shashakti Plains
Sampriya Wilderness
The Great Churning
Dandakaranya Forest
Vaanar Forest
Devabhumi Bay
Aharum Moorlands
Varuna's Abode
Thaara
Nimajana Chain
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Family

Indic culture is a collectivist culture, with an emphasis on one’s family, clan, and society. Extended families are common in this land, as it is usual to live with one’s parents, grandparents and uncles. Elders are almost deified in Indic culture, and there is a system of customs designed to respect and honor them. Examples of these common customs are listed below.

- Touching the feet of an elder when greeting them for the first time.
- Serving the eldest person at the table first during mealtime.
- Avoiding eye contact as a sign of respect in front of an elder.

Arranged marriages are the norm, and parents serve as matchmakers for the bride and groom. Marriages typically occur within the same clan and background. The people of Devabhumi spend great sums of money on their marriages, with even the poorest spending their entire life savings on their marriages. Marriage is a way to increase the honor and respect of a family within society.

When a child is born, the family will consult with a Jyotish to determine the name of the child. If the parents can afford it, the child is usually sent to an Ashram to be educated for five to ten years by a Guru. If the parents are too poor to afford an education at an Ashram, then the child joins the parents in their work around age 8.

Death

When someone dies, an elaborate ritual is carried out by their family. First, the body is laid on a wooden funeral pyre and burned, which allows the soul to leave the confines of the body. Then, the ashes of the individual are carried to the sacred Devapani river, where they are scattered. Locals believe that this allows the soul to escape the cycle of reincarnation and find peace.

Although this is common practice among most humans in Devabhumi, other races and nations will have variations of these customs, or different ones entirely. There is no singular custom or ritual that is practiced universally in Devabhumi. Instead, there are variations of common themes. For example, the Vaanars from the jungles wrap their dead in banana tree leaves before cremating them, and scatter their ashes in the air.

REINCARNATION

In Devabhumi, death is not the end. The body and soul are viewed as two separate entities. The condition of the body has no effect upon the soul. When the body dies, the soul simply moves to another body, like a person takes off old clothes and puts on new clothes.

The new body that a soul enters after death is determined by the karma accumulated by that soul. A soul with lots of positive karma can be reborn in a noble family, with a life of learning, peace, and fulfillment. A soul tainted by negative karma is born in a wretched body, one overcome with ills and pains, and lives a life of difficulty and struggle. After death, a soul journeys to Patala, where it is judged by the god of death Yamaraj. There, he determines if the soul goes to Svargaloka, remains in Patala, or if it is reborn into a new body.

Sometimes, if a soul feels like it has something left when it dies, then it lingers as a **Bhoota**, or a ghost. It wanders the land, attempting to finish its unfinished business, all the while being tempted and tormented by the feelings of hunger and pain. A soul that remains behind as a Bhoota feels the same hunger and desires as if it were still in the previous body, but is unable to satisfy itself, causing it to lash out.

Spindi Puja: A soul that lingers as a Bhoota may be satisfied upon completion of a specialized ritual. This ritual requires a priest, 108 gold pieces, and 4 hours of uninterrupted focus by the priest. If this is completed, then the soul is able to move on to another body.

NECROMANCY

Attempting to resurrect or re-animate the dead is universally considered a foul, nefarious practice. This is because the resurrected being's soul is prevented from reincarnating, and the body of the re-animated undead has no soul. This causes the soul to be stuck in "limbo," a perpetual state of restlessness. A Bhoota can be created in this way.

ASTROLOGY (JYOTISHA)

The Devavasi are highly observant of the natural world, noting patterns such as the appearance of new stars, planets, and constellations. This has led to the study of the night sky and the subsequent linking of stellar patterns with life events. A **Jyotish** (astrologer) is consulted before any major life event, such as the birth of a child, a marriage, or while on one's deathbed. The Jyotish consults a star-chart known as a horoscope and determines the best course of action to ensure well-being. These actions may be as mundane as offering a particular food to a god, moving furniture to face a different direction, or eliminating certain items from the home. A Jyotish can also determine what the name of a child should be, but this is becoming less and less common.

CURRENCY

The currency in Devabhumi follows three tiers of copper, silver, and gold. Ten copper pieces are equivalent to one silver piece. Ten silver pieces are equivalent to one gold piece. Various nations may stamp their coins with pictures of their Rajas, but the value is nevertheless the same.

FOOD

The food in Devabhumi utilizes an extensive selection of spices, herbs, and flavors, which are often traded and coveted. Different parts of Devabhumi will have unique dishes and preparations. For example, food in Northern Devabhumi tends to have flavorful, savory dishes with creams and mild spices. Crops like barley and millet are the staple of Bhavata cuisine. Food in Southern and Eastern Devabhumi is spicier and uses more fruits and vegetables. Rice, fish, and vegetables are the staples of these regions.

Vegetarianism: Although certain groups of people choose to avoid meat altogether, the majority of the population consumes some form of meat or seafood. The people in the North and East consume goat, sheep, and waterfowl. The people in the South rely on fish, prawn, crabs, and other seafood. However, it is a taboo entirely to eat any form of cattle, as they are considered sacred by the people of Devabhumi.

Some people also choose to abstain from garlic and onion, which are believed to ignite the passions and place the eater in a mode of spiritual ignorance. If one wishes to be ritually pure (for a Puja), then one must abstain from eating meat, garlic, or onions for 3 days prior to the Puja.

The common dishes of Devabhumi are listed below.

Dosa: The most famous dish of the south, a dosa is a thin bread made from a fermented paste of rice and gram flour, which is then baked until it is crisp. It is served with chutney (a spicy sauce) and sambar (a lentil soup).

Haah Joha Kumura: This eastern dish consists of fried duck, gourd, spices, and is typically served during a feast. It is also quite popular in the wintertime.

Kheer: This dessert originated in the south, but is now popular in all parts of Devabhumi, with many variations. It consists of boiled milk, cooked rice, dried fruits, and unrefined sugar (jaggery).

Khichdi: This northern dish consists of lentils and rice fried in ghee, with plenty of spices. There are hundreds of variations of this dish, some served with vegetables, others with ground meat.

Manchurian: This dish originated from the east, but is now eaten all across the land. It consists of fried cauliflower balls, herbs, and a spicy gravy.

Masor Tenga: This is a dish from the east, consisting of fish (usually carp), tomatoes, berries, and gourd. It is served with a spicy gravy and boiled rice.

Paratha: This flatbread is a staple of northern cuisine, consisting of millet or barley flour that is cooked in ghee (clarified butter). It has dozens of variations, and can be stuffed with vegetables or meat.

Phare: These are dumplings made from rice or barley flour, then stuffed with chickpeas, coriander, and garlic. This snack is popular in central Devabhumi.

Upma: This is a convenient meal from the south that is made from roasted rice flour and spices such as mustard seeds and cumin.

HOLIDAYS

There are many festivals in Devabhumi, each celebrating one of the many stories, gods, and cultures in the land. While there are far too many holidays to enumerate, the major ones are listed below.

Diwali: This is perhaps the largest and most anticipated festival of Devabhumi, one that is always memorable in the minds of those who see it for the first time. Diwali is known as the festival of lights, and it occurs on the 12th day of the eighth month (Kartikka). It represents the return of the beloved god-king Rama to his city Ayodhya after 14 years of exile.

During the day, inhabitants decorate their homes, streets, and walls with colorful iconography called rangolis. At nighttime, they fill their homes, cities, and villages with candles and lamps while dancing, feasting, and spending time with one's family and clan. The lights are so bright that remote villages are able to spot each other in the nighttime and revel in the shining lights of different settlements.

Holi: Also known as the festival of colors, this holiday falls on the 15th day of the twelfth month (Phalguna), and celebrates the coming of spring, with all the new life and love to come. It signifies the end of winter and the coming of fresh tidings. During this festival, people take to the streets while wearing white clothes and throw colorful powders and dyes on each other. This event usually lasts from sunrise to sunset, and a colorful mess is left in the aftermath.

Navaratri: The word Navaratri means nine nights, and it celebrates the nine incarnations of the goddess Durga (Parvati). According to the famous story, there were nine powerful Rakshasas that terrorized the living lands, wreaking havoc and slaughtering the people. The goddess Durga incarnated nine times, assuming a different form each time, and killed the Rakshasas.

This festival occurs on the eight month (Kartikka), and lasts for a total of nine nights. On each day, worshipers gather around a statue of Durga and perform a circular dance called garba, in increasing intensity with each night. The final night features an impressive show of endurance, movement, and zeal until the worshipers collapse in exhaustion, marking the end of the festival.

Onam: This three-day festival starts on the 28th day of the sixth month (Bhadra), and celebrates the harvest. Opulent feasts, exciting duels, and awe-inspiring dance performances are conducted on this festival. People decorate their homes with flowers and fine fragrances, while visiting temples of Vishnu who they thank for a bountiful harvest. If the harvest is lean, then they pray for a better one next year.

This festival is also a celebration of culture, as cities and villages will host competitions, parades, and displays of martial might during this time.

Ugadi: This festival marks the new year, starting on the first day of the first month (Chaitra). During this festival, a special dish is prepared called pachadi, which combines all the flavors of food. It serves as a representation of the new year, and a reminder to enjoy all of the flavors of life that the new year will bring. This festival lasts five days, during which people visit temples, buy new clothes, make plans for the future, and thoroughly clean their neighborhoods.

Uttarayan: This festival falls on the 15th day of the eleventh month (Magha). This is a festival dedicated to the sun god, Surya, as devotees dip themselves in rivers and flock to Sun Temples across Devabhumi. The most iconic part of this festival is kite flying, where people will take to the roofs and fly lightweight kites made from colorful cloth. On this day, the sky is a mosaic of colors, shapes, and forms made to please and honor Surya.

Vijayadashami (Dussera): Occurring 20 days before Diwali, this festival anticipates the return of god Rama to his city. It celebrates the death of Ravana, a rakshasa who kidnapped Rama's wife Sita. It also celebrates a broader victory of light over darkness, and of good over evil.

Large effigies of Ravana are constructed during this festival, then burned by shooting flaming arrows into them. A crowd will gather around the effigy and praise the fate of Ravana, while also hoping to ward away Rakshasas, Asuras, and other forces of darkness.

RECREATION

The life of the average Devavasi does not revolve around work. Once one's daily duties are complete, the rest of the day is open to gather with family, play games, and attend to hobbies. Aside from the numerous festivals that occupy the free time of the average Devavasi, there are various sports, games, and forms of recreation that are popular in the land.

Adu-Pulli-Atta: A two person game played on a triangular wooden board. One person controls the tiger and the other person controls a group of lambs. The tiger attempts to hunt the lambs, while they try to escape.

Chaturanga: This game of tactics is played on a wooden checkerboard. Much like chess, each side has sixteen pieces and the objective is to capture the opponent's king.

Fact or Fantasy: Chaturanga was the precursor to the modern game of chess, dating back to 5,000 B.C. Through trade and contact with other civilizations, this game spread through Eurasia, slowly evolving and becoming the modern game of chess as we know it.

Gilli Danda: A four person game with the goal of hitting a gili (a small stick) with a danda (a larger stick) as far as possible while the other players try to retrieve the gili. This game does not require much equipment and is therefore popular among children.

Kabbadi: A sport that combines the popular children's game of tag with wrestling. There are two teams separated by a line drawn on the ground. The objective of the game is for one person to run across the line into the opponent's field, tag as many opponents as possible, and run back across the line to their own team without being tackled.

Kambala: An popular sport of bull racing that attracts large crowds each year. Bulls are driven by farmers across paddy-fields while spectators place bets on who they think will win.

Pehelwani (Kushti): A form of mud-wrestling where two wrestlers try to take each other down in a mud pit. This sport is popular among warriors and soldiers.

Raj-Mantri-Chor-Sipahi: A role-playing game with four people. Each person takes the role of a king (raja), minister (mantri), thief (chor), or soldier (sipahi). The objective of the game is to guess who the thief is.

Teen Patta: A card game that is popular in almost every household, but especially among gamblers. This game is similar to poker, where there is a large pot and players must match bets (chaal) or pull out. This game is played with the standard 52-card deck.

Vallam Kali: A large-scale boat race that takes place every year during the festival of Onam where war-canoes, longboats, and rafts all race against each other on a lake.

TABOOS

The culture of Devabhumi is built on honor, tradition, and century-old customs. As a result, there are many ways to offend or dishonor someone. Common insults and taboos are listed below to avoid an accidental social blunder.

Cattle: Cows, bulls, buffaloes, and other cattle are considered holy in Devabhumi. It is a major taboo to slaughter these animals and to consume their meat.

Footwear: It is customary to remove your footwear before entering a house or a temple. Not removing your footwear before entering these places can come across as rude and insulting.

Left Hand: The right hand is considered to be clean and pure. Therefore, it is customary to eat, offer sacrifices, and wash your face with your right hand. A character who is left-handed may get strange looks from others when they use their left hand in place of their right hand.

Placement of Feet: The feet are considered dirty, especially the soles. It is an insult to touch someone else or their items with one's feet. It is also considered an insult to Saraswati (the goddess of knowledge) to touch a book or piece of writing with one's feet.

Shaved Head: Shaving someone's hair is a great humiliation to that person and symbolizes the shaving of one's honor. This is usually reserved as a punishment for criminals.

LANGUAGES

The languages of Devabhumi reflect the diverse kaleidoscope of cultures, tribes, and kingdoms that exist within the land. There are two main languages that spread across most of the realm and a small group of languages that are unique and localized.

The first main language in Devabhumi is **Bhavata**. This is the most common language in the realm, spoken primarily in Northern and Central Devabhumi. Bhavata is a gentle language that is easy to learn and quite simplified in grammar. It developed to allow trade and unification of the various tribes in Devabhumi.

The second main language is **Parthiva**. This is spoken mainly in the southern areas of Devabhumi. Parthiva is a difficult language that is spoken quickly and has many regional dialects. Those who dwell in the southern parts of Devabhumi take great pride in their language and choose to speak it exclusively in the presence of other languages.

Asrita is spoken by the inhabitants of the humid jungles of the East, a place isolated from the rest of Devabhumi. It is a smooth language that combines elements of both Bhavata and Parthiva.

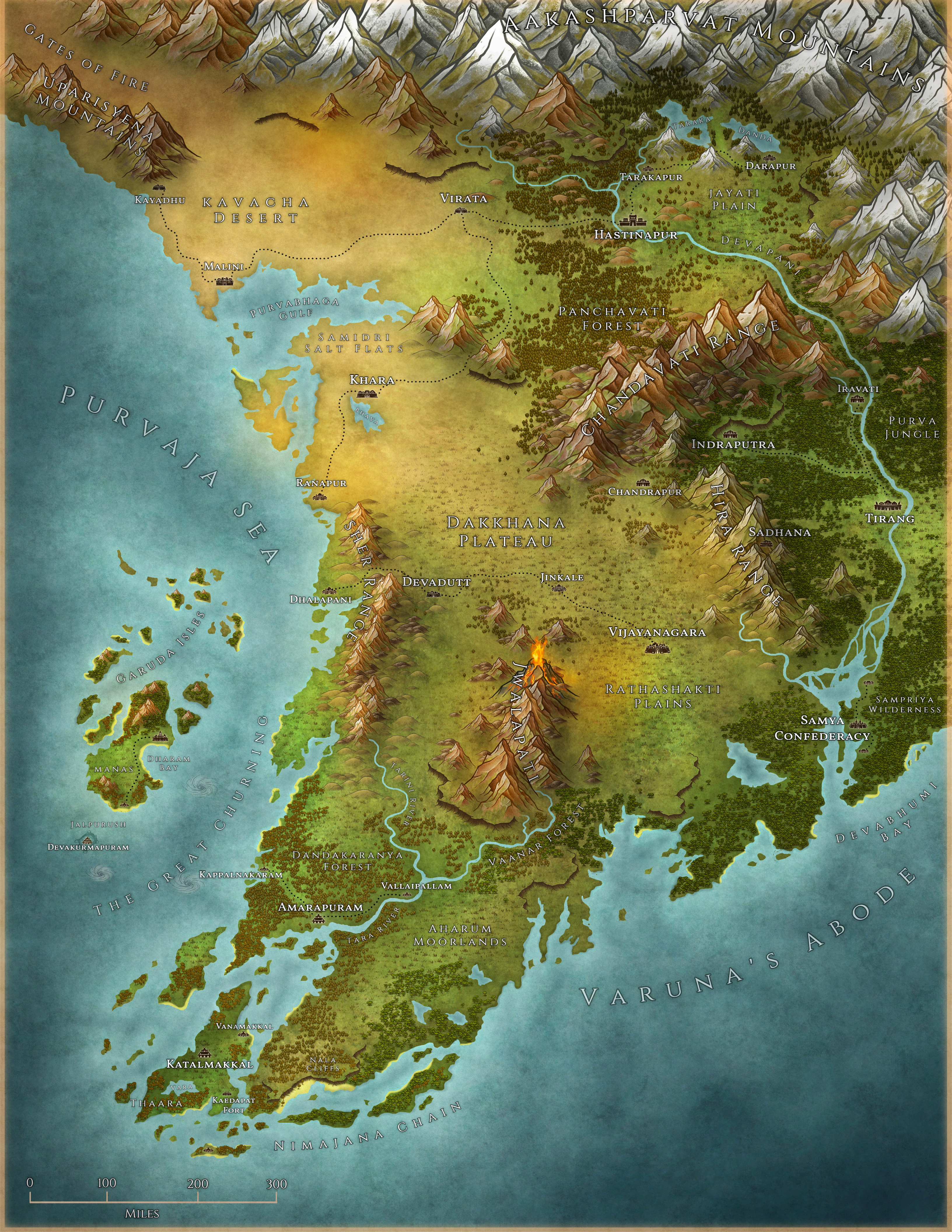
Vaanara is the spoken language of the ape-like race of creatures known as Vaanars scattered throughout the wilderness. It is a language characterized by high pitched shrills and low guttural sounds.

Varali, or "language of the trees," is the rhythmic language spoken by dwellers of the forests, such as Jambavans and Yakshis. This language mimics nature and involves wind-like whooshing and whistling sounds.

Patala is the harsh, aberrant language spoken by the denizens of Patala, the Underworld. This is the main language of Nagas and Asuras.

Svarga is the lighthearted yet sophisticated language spoken by the gods, the court attendants, and the denizens of the heavens. This language is also spoken by Apsaras and Garudas.

Anarya is not a singular language but rather an umbrella term referring to a group of similar dialects spoken by the mysterious nomadic Zhav tribes that wander the lands. This language is both strange and alluring, bizarre yet satisfying to the ears.


Aakashparvat Mountains
Gates of Fire
Uparisyena Mountains
Taraka
Danda
Darapur
Tarakapur
Jayati Plain
Kayadhu
Kavacha Desert
Virata
Hastinapur
Devapani
Malini
Purvabhaga Gulf
Panchavati Forest
Samidri Salt Flats
Chandavati Range
Khara
Bhava
Iravati
Purva Jungle
Purvaja Sea
Indraputra
Ranapur
Chandrapur
Dakkhana Plateau
Tirang
Sadhana
Sher Range
Hira Range
Devadutt
Jinkale
Dhalapani
Vijayanagara
Garuda Isles
Jwalapati
Rathashakti Plains
Sampriya Wilderness
Samya Confederacy
Manas
Dharam Bay
The Great Churning
Tarini River
Jalpurush
Devakurmapuram
Vaanar Forest
Devabhumi Bay
Dandakaranya Forest
Kappalnakaram
Vallaipallam
Amarapuram
Tara River
Aharum Moorlands
Varuna's Abode
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Nations & Tribes

John Ric Detoon

Silver Compass Maps

The various nations in Devabhumi are like waves in the ocean that ebb and flow. With time, each nation falls and a new one springs up in its place. Devabhumi is a land of different cultures, which are much older and longer-lasting than the various successor states and principalities that are scattered throughout the land.

Listed below are the main kingdoms, principalities, and tribes that rule over Devabhumi in the current year, 1,044 N.S.

NORTH DEVABHUMI

The ice from the Aakashparvat Mountains gives way to form the fierce Devapani River, which cuts through much of Northern Devabhumi. This river is the life and blood of the numerous people that settle along the banks, the holy water nourishing both body and soul.

Across the vast Jatayi plains, one can hear the thunder of hooves that pull iron chariots, signifying the warlikeness of the Bhavata people. This is a place for conquest and struggle, where rajas and ranis pit their armies against each other, making and breaking alliances at a whim. It is also a place with rich history, where many sages and gods walked the earth and where grand temples resembling heavenly palaces were built.

However, the conflict that frequents this land leads to many cities, palaces, and temples being torn down and rebuilt. It is a place with ruins of many great civilizations and the haunted battlefield of Kurukshetra, where the Mahabharata war took place.

The Panchavati is an ancient forest that existed since the Satya Yuga. It is the home of many mythical races, temples, sages, and ruins. It is even believed that some of the gods have made their home in this holy forest. The forest is also the home of bandits, asuras, and other forces of darkness that slowly grow their influence over the land. A prudent devavasi will advise you to stray far away from it. Regardless of the danger, many pilgrims and adventurers make their way into the forest.

Towards the far north, the sky-scraping Aakashparvat mountains separate the world of mortals from the world of the gods, serving as a natural barrier. The god Shiva makes his abode on top of one of the highest peaks of this range, isolated by harsh winds and bitter ice. Despite the difficult conditions, some have managed to survive and even flourish among the mountains.

The smaller Chandavati Range to the south provides a natural barrier, preventing large-scale invasion by kingdoms of the south. This range is home to a fierce eagle-headed race known as Garudas, as well as gigantic asuras known as Danavas. It is not recommended to traverse this range.

The western edge features the vast Kavacha desert, dotted with salt flats and oases. The famous Saraswati River once flowed here in the Treta Yuga but has since dried up, causing a great deal of migration towards the west coast. Further inland, the red sands of the Gates of Fire are reported to be as hot as a blazing fire. Only the crafty Zhav nomads are capable of navigating this desert.

THE KURU KINGDOM

This is the oldest kingdom in Northern Devabhumi, with territory covering much of the Jayati Plain and numerous cities dotted alongside the Devapani river. The capital of the Kuru Kingdom is Hastinapur, the famed city over which the Mahabharata was fought. After the Pandavas defeated the Kurus, they ruled for three decades, later abdicating to Pariksit Raja.

His dynasty continued, and the kingdom is now ruled by the crafty Ashwa Raja, grandson of Pariksit Raja. Ashwa Raja, much like the neighboring rulers, is warlike and opportunistic and is fond of boasting his power. Despite his aggressive nature, he is quite just and noble in his dealing with his subjects, often inviting them to voice their grievances in his palace.

This kingdom is notable for its large standing armies and towering war elephants. Much of its military was decimated in the Mahabharata War, but the kingdom is in the process of replenishing its numbers to great effect. Chariot warfare is limited to Rajas, Ranis, and other members of the nobility, whereas the rest of the army fights on foot or horseback.

A Note on Tamed Elephants: Capturing and taming elephants is a practice dating all the way back to the Satya-Yuga. Tamed elephants in Devabhumi are a common sight, as they are used to carry heavy loads for construction, transporting people of importance, and fighting in large battles.

The people of the Kuru Kingdom were once proud and fiercely competitive, but their fiery natures have been dampened by the recent Mahabharata War. People of this kingdom tend to stick to the societal role assigned to them at birth, as they are strict adherents to the Law of Dharma. It is rare to see a peasant receiving formal education or an artisan enlisting in the army. Religious worship in this kingdom is dogmatic and highly orthodox, with temples to major deities such as Indra, Vishnu, and Shiva. Esoteric schools of thought are not popular here, and practitioners of these schools of thought may attract unwanted attention from the people. When visiting the Kuru Kingdom, it is recommended to try to fit in among the populace by imitating their speech, dress, and mannerisms.

Hastinapur: This is the capital of the Kuru Kingdom, with two layers of concentric walls forming a ring around the city. Hastinapur is split in half by the Devapani River, with multiple bridges connecting both sides. The northern part of the city is the oldest, with the southern part being added during the reconstruction period that followed the Mahabharata war. The royal palace of Ashwa Raja is located in the center of the city. This city once held a million people, but the population has dwindled to a few hundred thousand. Hastinapur still remains one of the largest and most populous cities in Devabhumi. Pilgrims from all over the land flock to Hastinapur to visit the Ghats and the grand Mahasvara temple. Greater detail is provided for this city in the **Cities** chapter.

Darapur: This city is built next to Lake Danda, near the base of the Aakashparvat Mountains. Darapur serves as the headquarters of the Tirth Taraka (see factions), as many pilgrims come to this city before venturing further into the Aakashparvat mountains. It features terraced homes built on top of cliffs and hills and a beautiful temple to Shiva.

Tarakapur: This farming city sits along the Taraka river, a tributary into the sacred Devapani river. It is a walled city with a small population of nobles and artisans residing within the gates and a much larger population of farmers scattered outside. Miles and miles of farms can be seen from the towers of this city, with crops such as cotton, barley, and millet. Regular fortifications are built alongside the river, with a dual purpose to watch the roads and protect the miles of farmland that extend from the city.

Points of Interest:

Amar Cave Temple: This cave marks the northern border of the Kuru Kingdom, as it dares not advance much further into the Aakashparvat Mountains. This holy cave is a popular shrine for pilgrims, who come to see beautiful statues of Shiva, carved from an unnatural blue stone. Pilgrims who have visited this cave temple have noticed their nails and hair growing at a rate much faster than usual, and those who stay for extended periods return with new wrinkles on their face. It is believed that the altitude and air of this cave can cause one to age rapidly.

Colossus of Rudra: A colossal statue tucked away in the Aakashparvat Mountains that dates back to the Satya-Yuga. This statue depicts Rudra, a form of Lord Shiva, and stands over a hundred feet tall. It is slightly tilted due to the shifting earth over centuries, and the statue is covered with overgrown moss and vines. A small stream of cold water flows from the head of the statue. It is believed that anyone who drinks this water can extend their natural lifespan by a hundred years. To reach this statue, one must traverse steep mountains, deceptive chasms, and landslide-prone hills. Not many pilgrims reach this statue, but those that arrive at this location find it to be well worth the danger.

Kurukshetra: This haunted battlefield is where the famous Mahabharata took place, claiming the lives of millions of soldiers. Now, it is a desolate place where trees have withered, animals have left, and not even a single blade of grass grows. Many legendary weapons were used in this war, which are now buried here. It is not advisable to travel to this battlefield, as it is haunted by Bhootas, Asuras, and Vetalas (see **Monsters**). But that does not stop the occasional traveler, seeking to pay respects to their ancestors or uncover a legendary weapon.

The Matsya Kingdom

This small kingdom lies west of the Kuru Kingdom, surrounded by rough hills and fertile land. What this kingdom lacks in size, it makes up for in magical prowess. The capital city of Virata is home to powerful wizards and an ancient school of magic. During the Mahabharata, both sides attempted to win over this crucial ally, with the Kurus obtaining their aid in the end. However, their help proved futile, as entire Matsya armies were destroyed in the war. Now, the kingdom is in a weakened state, but the lack of soldiers is compensated by the presence of experienced wizards and fortified magic.

Satamdhanu Raja rules over the land, a reclusive ruler who spends his time within his palace or observing the known world from his airship. The people are not fond of Satamdhanu Raja, thinking him to be thoughtless and cowardly. But in reality, the king is highly intelligent and tactful, seeking new magical discoveries that would be useful to his people.

The people of the Matsya Kingdom are inquisitive, curious, and relatively open-minded. Outsiders visiting this kingdom may find themselves being followed by crowds of children or strangers introducing them to their town. The Matsya people are proud of their nation, its powerful magic, and the highly advanced architecture of their settlements. They seek to highlight the kingdom's accomplishments at any given moment to a visitor. One should watch their words while in this kingdom, as any hint of disapproval or scorn will arouse a patriotic fury in a Matsya citizen.

Virata: Those that observe the walls of this city from a distance notice that they seem to shimmer with an ethereal silver. This city is built on magic, with arcane fortifications to protect the inhabitants and day-to-day enchantments to make life easier. A large illusory royal palace is built to appear as if it were intersected by the roads and homes of the city. In reality, the palace is in a demiplane, requiring express permission by the Raja to enter or exit. This palace can be observed as a semi-transparent mirage on top of regular city streets.

This city is home to a population of around fifty thousand, with a myriad of different races, including humans, half-apsaras, garudas, nagas, and much more. The people of this city are more inquisitive and open-minded than the surrounding kingdoms, allowing for this city to be a hub for different schools of thought. An ancient college serves as a place of education for budding wizards that will serve this city with their skills. Visitors to this city may also observe a strange aircraft flying through the sky. This is the Vimana—a legendary airship capable of traveling the known world. It is currently in the possession of Satamdhanu Raja, but he has been known to lend it out to adventurers who are willing to perform important tasks for him.

North, Marianne Water Palace – Chitore. India. Decr. 1878 by North, Marianne. Public Domain.

Maladhari’s Dominion

Ever since the rise of the Asura Queen a few decades ago, a mist of uneasiness covers the cities around northwest Devabhumi, especially around the Kavacha Desert. Four cities have fallen to Maladhari so far—Kayadhu, Malini, Ranapur, and Khara, the capital city of Maladhari’s budding empire. All four cities are controlled by Maladhari and her armies of asuras.

Each city is ruled by someone chosen by Maladhari. Kayadhu is ruled by a giant Daitya (see **Monsters**) known as Sambara, known for his tyrannical style of governance. Malini is overrun by amphibious asuras known as Nivatakavachas, with their ruler being the fervent Navasur. Ranapur is ruled by an ambitious human queen named Vilamba Rani, who is loyal to Maladhari. Khara is ruled directly by Maladhari, which contains the royal palace of the Asura Queen.

The people of Maladhari’s Dominion are disillusioned by the asura leadership and live in constant fear. They are too scared to attempt any major rebellion but may commit small crimes out of spite. In cities such as Kayadhu and Malini, the will of the ordinary people has been shattered as they perform backbreaking labor and starve in their homes. The asuras, on the other hand, are ecstatic to command control of such large cities, with plenty of human underlings to do as they command. They take what they please, terrify the local populace, and aim to repopulate the cities with a majority asura population.

Visitors to Maladhari’s Dominion should practice extreme caution, as the roads are patrolled by asuras and they only allow specific merchants and skilled mercenaries into their city. Even if a visitor is granted entry into a city, they are still not safe, as they can be targeted by rogue asuras, vengeful citizens, or arrested under false accusations.

Khara: The capital city of Maladhari’s Dominion, this settlement was once ruled by a long line of nobility. This city swelled with refugees after the drying up of the Saraswati River, which put the city in a much weakened state. Maladhari, a cunning opportunist, took advantage of this situation and conquered the city with an army of asuras.

The population of this city remains predominantly human, but much of the nobility has been killed and replaced by a new class of asura elite. Humans have been allowed to keep most of their previous roles and occupations, but administrative and top-military roles are filled exclusively by asuras. So far, no one has attempted rebellion on a massive scale, as Maladhari’s rule brought much-needed stability to the city.

The royal palace of Maladhari is one of the most notable features of this city. Built by the dark magic of the Asura Queen, this royal palace floats fifty feet above the ground. The only way to enter or leave this palace is through two highly guarded magical portals. The highest room is the dwelling place of Maladhari, featuring circular windows that allow a full view of the city. There, she calmly meditates over her visions to conquer all of Devabhumi and bring forth the Kali-Yuga.

Kayadhu: This city sits just south of the Uparisyena Mountain range, nestled in rolling hills that decorate a rough countryside. Kayadhu was originally a frontier town founded by explorers who discovered strange gems called Maanik with magical properties within the mountains. Recently, this city has swelled with a population of fifty thousand, as the people seek to make a fortune from mining these valuable gems.

Unfortunately for the entrepreneurs and explorers of the city, it was one of the first to fall to Maladhari’s rule. She saw a greater use of the Maanik gems, using them to build and fortify her aerial palace. The council of merchants that once ruled this city was deposed and replaced by a tyrannical daitya. His name is **Sambara**, and he is a powerful asura known for his imposing frame and tyrannical nature. He rules the city with an iron fist, punishing any dissent brutally. The people of the city are now forced to work in the mines, facing monsters and disease to retrieve as many Maanik gems as possible. Despite the harsh working conditions and tyrannical rule, the people are kept silent with fear by Sambara and his asura minions.

Malini: This coastal city is built next to the Purvabhaga Gulf. It was once a mercantile sea town that served as a trade hub for goods. Traders from across the Purvaja Sea would arrive in this city, seeking to sell their wares to a large population of merchants.

Unbeknownst to the inhabitants of the city, there was also a small tribe of aquatic asuras known as Nivatakavachas that lived about fifty miles offshore. After Maladhari conquered Khara, she convinced the chief of the Nivatakavachas, **Navasur**, to launch an amphibious attack on the city. Supported by Maladhari’s land army, the asuras took the city completely by surprise. It fell within a matter of hours, and the cruel and animalistic Navasur ravaged the city with his army.

Since the fall of the city to Navasur, it is a shell of what it once was. Much of the city has burned to ash, and the trapped inhabitants live in constant fear. Navasur's goons roam the streets, looting homes and taking what they please. This has come to Maladhari's attention, as she does not approve of indiscriminate murder and theft. If Navasur doesn't gain control over the situation soon, Maladhari may send her asura armies to intervene.

Ranapur: This city was ruled by a long-standing dynasty of Rajas and Ranis who held themselves to a high standard of martial expertise. One did not become a noble by blood alone, but also by merit. A strict culture of honor and training molded the minds of the young nobility, creating effective rulers.

After the death of her father, Chitrajan Raja, the cunning young **Vilamba Rani** assumed the throne at the age of fourteen. Within a few years, she secured her position by making anyone who threatened her position disappear. These "disappearings" were conducted on ministers, tutors, and even family members. When Maladhari came to power and started expanding, Vilamba Rani was quick to ally herself with the Asura Queen. She saw her rise as an opportunity to secure her position even more. The alliance allowed Rani Vilamba to keep the city free of asuras and maintain her power as long as she pledged total loyalty to the Asura Queen.

The city of Ranapur is a prestigious settlement with two layers of walls and a grand section of old architecture with lush gardens, smooth sandstone temples, and towers adorned with golden domes. The population is mostly human, with a small minority of other races such as Half-Apsaras and Nagas.

Points of Interest

Amber Fort: An ancient fort once built by the desert rajas that stands atop steep cliffs. This fort is the westernmost territory of Maladhari, protecting the Asura Queen's borders and providing a stepping stone for expansion eastward. The fort is manned by a large contingent of asuras, commanded by Bhayasur, a daitya chieftain.

Samidri Salt Flats: A long stretch of mostly uninhabited salt flats that extend all the way to the sea. During the monsoon season, the salt flats fill with standing water, creating a muddy wetland. Inhabitants of this area report a strange phenomenon at night known as Chir Batti. This unexplained phenomenon features mercury-colored lights in the distance that seem to fly like comets through the darkness. These lights are distracting for nighttime travelers, and following them is a sure death.

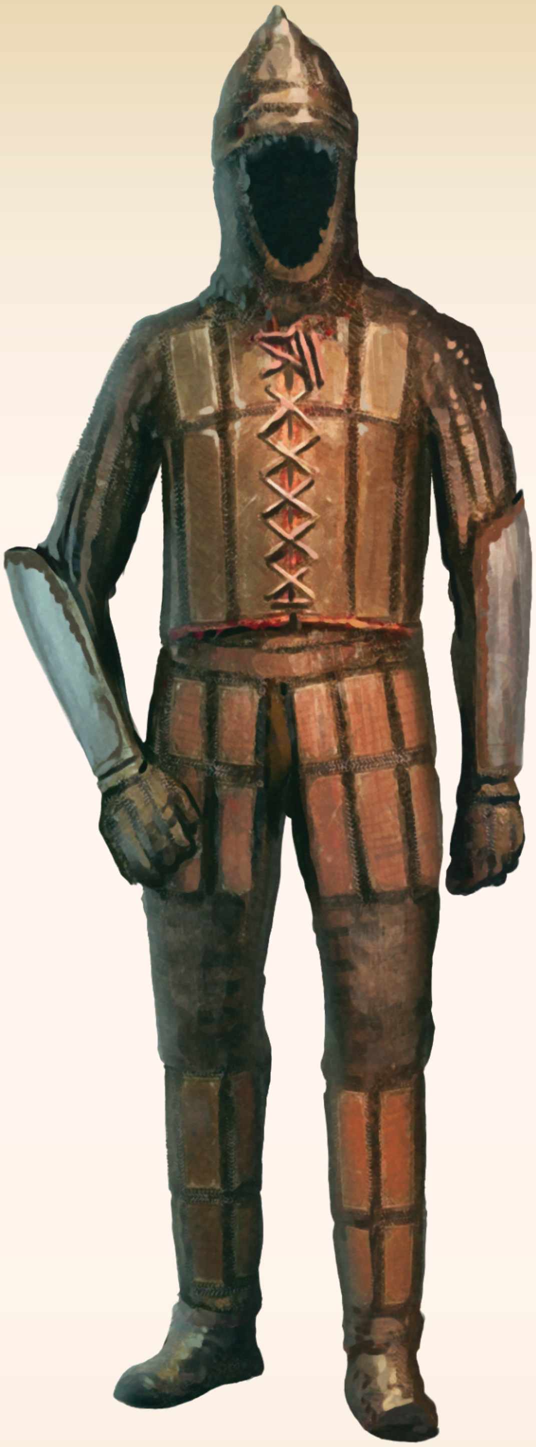
Upadi: A cursed town that is haunted by bhootas and pishachas, and those that journey to it will not return. This town is shrouded in mystery and it remains unmarked on the map. All that's known of its location is that it is hidden in the Kavacha Desert. The town reveals itself to weary travelers and merchants, disguised as an oasis town. As the travelers get closer, they start to notice the sun darkening and the land graying. If they still continue, they are snatched up by the dark forces of the city

The Zhav

Since the dawn of the Dvapara-Yuga, a new group of people have made their home in the lands of Devabhumi. The horse-riding Zhav nomads originate from a place beyond the Gates of Fire—a dry plateau with open air and clear skies, a place with swift steeds and hardy warriors. They do not worship the gods of Devabhumi, instead aligning themselves with a sky spirit known as Dyuman. With them, they have brought inventions that have been widely adopted by the people of Devabhumi, such as Chilta Hazar Nakha (see **Equipment**) and horse-archery.

The Zhav people have their own unique culture separate from the culture of Devabhumi. Born under the open sky, a Zhav has lived on the road and slept under the stars as early as they can remember. Every Zhav learns the skills of archery and horse riding, starting as early as six. They believe in a central sky spirit, the one who created the vast open sky and the grand plains they roam. The Zhav have elaborate worship rituals, where they venerate their ancestors surrounded by a circle of stampeding horses. They are pastoralists that travel with large herds of goats and cattle, sustaining themselves from the animals alone.

The Zhav have learned to imitate the dress, language, and mannerisms of the Devavasi. They mingle with the native population, but only on a surface level. A Zhav is a nomad, and he or she may find it hard to form a deep connection with someone other than a Zhav. Their culture and way of life are utterly foreign to the average Devavasi, and only someone who is a Zhav may understand the subtle peculiarities of that culture.



Chilta Hazar Nakh by John Ric Detoon

EASTERN DEVABHUMI

The eastern peaks of the icy Aakashparvat mountains end in gentle hills dominated by warm jungles and forests. The dense canopies hide a rich civilization where various races freely trade and mingle, and where the forest provides all the protection one would need from intruding forces.

The forest that provides can also take away. During the monsoon season, great floods wash the land, taking with them the feeble structures built over the year. To thrive here, one must be flexible, like the trees that bend but do not break.

Rajas and Ranis rule over their small kingdoms that are hidden among the lagoons and mangrove forests. Their neighbors might be merely a mile away, or over a hundred miles. Here, large-scale warfare is prevented by the natural landscape. Conflicts are settled through skirmishes and negotiations. The subtle arts of speech, persuasion, and cunning are employed frequently here.

The Purva Jungle to the far east is dominated by rolling hills and dense trees. Peacocks nest in colorful glades, and elephants can be seen charging through the thick bamboo grass. The Devapani River runs through the center of the jungle, with large cities having been built along it. This jungle is a haven for almost every being that roams the land, including exotic beasts, scheming asuras, meditating sages, and wandering bhootas. It can be a dangerous but rewarding place for adventure, as you may encounter almost anything.

The Chandavati and Hira mountain ranges provide a natural barrier to the west. Large cliffsides further separate the mountains from the jungle. According to legend, the bolts of Indra carved steep cliffs to provide the people of the east with adequate protection from intruders. The settlement that is built at the foot of these cliffs is devoted to Indra.

The Hira range is a small mountain range that is famous for producing the largest diamonds ever seen in Devabhumi. Smaller diamonds can be mined on the western side of the mountain range, but the larger diamonds come from the east. As a result, many expeditions have attempted to access the range from the east, but with little success. The Hira range is also a haven for Nagas, who use the diamonds to adorn their heads. They do not take kindly to trespassers.

Further south, the Devapani river forms a delta in the Sampriya Wilderness and empties into the ocean. The fiercely independent Samya people settle along Devabhumi Bay, a much desired location due to its potential as an economic hub.

MAGADHA KINGDOM

The Magadha kingdom is surrounded by thick jungle on all sides, requiring great difficulty to reach. Its secluded territory is a haven for people and races of all kinds, from the lumbering jambavan to the airborne garuda. Much of this kingdom's settlements are built above the ground, either on treetops or stilts. It is a hub of trade and commerce in the east, with merchants from far-flung lands arriving to buy rare products. **Samyukta Rani**, a queen notable for her adventurous pasttimes and daring hobbies, rules over this kingdom. Since a young age, she has attended tiger hunts, accompanied trade expeditions, and visited remote pilgrimage spots. Her attitude to life translates into her rule, as the Rani can be very bold but also reckless. Her ministers help to dampen her attitude, preserving the integrity of the kingdom.

The Magadha people live in tall wooden homes. They paint their teeth with different colors and wear red silk on their heads, with their long black hair flowing behind them. A deep collaborative spirit is present in the hearts of the people, leading them to help each other and work together to ensure the well being of the city. The Magadha people appear to be very warm and welcoming, inviting weary visitors to stay at their homes and providing them with food and other amenities.

Tirang: This capital city is located along the Devapani River. This city does not have any walls, and the homes are built on treetops and ten-foot stilts due to the annual flooding that happens during the monsoon season. The city's defense is managed by high watchtowers, wooden barricades, and plenty of hidden traps. Many invaders have mistaken this unwalled city as an easy target but learned their lesson when facing the heavy resistance of the city's inhabitants.

Iravati: A riverside town that is known for its floating gardens that are arranged in beautiful concentric circles. These gardens are full of gourds, pulses, and fruits; schools of small fish circle in the water around the gardens, providing a surplus of food to the townsfolk. This town lacks fortified walls, but the presence of watchtowers and dense trees provides protection to the folk that live here.

Points of Interest:

Bhamsvedi: Bhasmvedi is a shrine to the Devapani River. Pilgrims of Bhamsvedi seek out this place to wade into the spiritually cleansing holy water of the river, enter the shrine, and submerge the ashes of their lost beloveds in the shrine to bring their spirits closer to Moksha. Those who are truly remorseful for their sins against others can find emotional healing through communion and sacrifice with the goddess in one of her holiest grounds. Reaching such a location is not a simple task, however, as one must first pass the numerous crocodiles who guard the area to first access the grounds to Bhasmvedi. The crocodiles can sense whether or not such pilgrims are pure enough of heart to deserve to enter Bhasmvedi at all.

CHANDAVATI KINGDOM

This kingdom is tucked away between the Purva Jungle and the Chandavati range. Its territory consists of a capital city surrounded by smaller cliffside towns and mountainside villages. According to local history, this kingdom was founded by refugees of an ancient famine that took place a thousand years ago in the Dakkhana Plateau.

Legend has it that as these refugees traveled, the famine seemed to follow them as if it were a prowling monster. When they crossed the border into Eastern Devabhumi, they reaped a measly harvest. A wise sage proposed that before they enjoy their food, they should sacrifice a tenth of it to Indra. Pleased at this gesture by the starving people, the lord Indra ensured a bountiful harvest each year after that.

The regal **Madhura Rani** rules over this kingdom, coming from a lineage of impoverished nobles who were also affected by the Dakkhana Famine. She enjoys an unbroken line of succession and a stable rule. Much like her people, Madhura Rani is still wary of surrounding threats, such as the giant mountain-dwelling Danavas that rend villages from time to time.

The people of this kingdom are proud worshipers of Indra, the god of thunderstorms. Every year during the monsoon season, this kingdom is astoundingly spared from flash floods and landslides that strike its neighbors. Owing this protection to Indra, the people dedicate a tenth of their harvest each year to the god, offering it on a massive pyre as part of a three-day puja called the *Indra Yagna*. The Chandavati people are fiercely proud and guarded, as their history of conflict has instilled a culture of wariness and xenophobia. Visitors arouse deep suspicion among the populace. Travelers who visit this kingdom should show respect to even the most common of people.

Indraputra: This city is named after Indra, the patron god of the Chandavati people, who protects the city from its enemies and ensures a bountiful harvest each year. It is built alongside a cliff, one that is believed to be carved by the thunder god himself. This city has tall, magically fortified walls that help protect the residents from a monstrous race of asuras known as Danavas, who are especially feared for their spellcasting ability.

A large swath of farmland surrounds the city, settled by farmers who grow staple crops such as rice, millet, and barley. Numerous herds of water buffalo are used to till the fields and provide sustenance to the people. Each year, there is a surplus of food, which contributes to the city's rapidly growing population of seventy thousand. At this rate, the city of Indraputra will be the most populous city in a few hundred years.

Chandrapur: Known as the "city of the moon," Chandrapur may look like any ordinary settlement during the day. Its true form comes alive during the night as the moon illuminates the roads in pale, silvery light. Visitors to this city will find that it is enveloped in a permanent full moon, brightening the night sky and allowing the inhabitants to live semi-nocturnal lives. This city was founded by a Yakshi (a nature-spirit) named Chandini, a devotee to Chandra and friend of the people.

When Indraputra was a young settlement with a growing population, many of its people went into the wilderness to find other fertile areas to settle. Chandini called these people to form a city in a grove sacred to the god Chandra. As the stories recall, Chandini taught the people to hunt at night, offer sacrifices to Chandra, and cultivate crops in the moonlight. Many of the crops and gardens surrounding Chandrapur are nourished by the moonlight, which causes them to grow at two or three times the normal rate. Visitors to Chandrapur may find themselves awed by the beauty of the city and the lunar worship rituals of the people.

NEELANAG KINGDOM

The Neelanag Kingdom is a small nation of nagas, which are half-human, half-serpentine creatures with divine ancestry. The surface-dwelling nagas do not prefer sunlight and prefer to build their settlements under thick jungle canopies or within cavernous mountains. The Neelanag Kingdom stretches over much of the Hira Range, providing the nagas natural protection from surrounding nations.

Haranag Raja rules over the kingdom, a wealthy, opulent ruler that suffers from an impending succession crisis. None of the Raja's six wives have been able to conceive a child, much to the despair of the citizens and the Raja. Haranag Raja is almost a hundred years old, reaching the end of the natural lifespan of a naga. Rumors brew of upcoming conflict and civil strife when the Raja is gone, as there is no one to succeed him.

The world Neelanag quite literally means "blue snake," as the nagas of this kingdom have a deep midnight blue skin tone. Haranaj Raja is the only exception, whose skin is a light olive green. Theories that the Raja might be able to conceive a child with a naga who also shares his olive green skin circulate among the commoners, but so far, no such naga has been found.

Each naga is adorned with a jewel on their forehead known as the *meena*. This jewel emits light around the naga, changing colors depending on their mood and allowing them to see in the dark. The Hira Range is full of diamonds, topaz, and other precious gems that the nagas adorn themselves with. Rumor is that great cities of the Neelanag Kingdom are built with gemstones, with each household owning an impressive array of brilliant jewels. This has made the kingdom a target for adventurers, bandits, and envious rajas. But the natural terrain of the Hira Range, along with the fear-inducing prowess of the naga warriors has held back every incursion on their territory. Visitors who do not seek to usurp the kingdom's wealth are welcome, but care must be taken that one should not appear too interested or impressed by the kingdom's opulence.

Sadhana: The opulent capital city of the Naga kingdom, a city whose streets are paved with lustrous diamonds. Sadhana is built deep within the Hira Mountains, requiring a day's journey through the undermountain to reach the city. This city is home to fifty thousand nagas, one of the largest naga settlements outside of Patala, and the royal palace of Haranag Raja is built here. A large underground river flows through the city, providing the residents with sustenance. Following this river upstream leads to veins of unmined diamonds and topaz of enormous proportions.

SAMYA CONFEDERACY

This is a group of loosely organized tribes that all share a unique hunter-gatherer lifestyle unlike any other nation in Devabhumi. Very few travelers have visited this nation, as it requires an arduous journey through the heart of Devabhumi or a voyage circumnavigating the entire subcontinent. Those that visit enjoy a warm welcome and a position of honor for as long as they stay. Some visitors, finding it too hard to return home, decide to stay and live with the Samya people over their natural lifespans.

This confederacy is ruled by a group of six chieftains that represent each tribe. This group convenes during important occasions, such as before a war or after a natural calamity. There are six total tribes, listed in descending order based on their size: Makarati, Draksa, Vyaghra, Unnata, Muni, and Mukhi.

The Makarati tribe is located along the coast, building large settlements and trading with their neighbors. The Draksa is the most warlike of all the tribes, engaging in skirmishes with surrounding nations and pushing their boundaries, much to the criticism of the other tribes. The Vyaghra tribe is nested deep in the jungle, and their hunters are most notably clad with tiger skin. The Unnata tribe features unusually tall men and women, reaching upwards of seven feet tall. The smaller Muni and Mukhi tribes are the offspring of a singular tribe that experienced a bloody civil war.

The Samya people have lived here for as long as they can remember. Their way of life is simple, but by no means primitive. They have developed ingenious hunting methods, tamed the stubborn sea beasts known as makaras (see **Mounts**), and built elaborate coastal homes that float with the tides. While still familiar with the native gods of Devabhumi, the Samya people have an additional collection of nature spirits and ancestors that they add to their pantheon of worship. Visitors should approach this nation with an open mind, as they may be surprised by the hospitality they receive.

Points of Interest:

Devabhumi Bay: This is the endpoint of the sacred Devapani River, where it empties into the vast ocean. This bay is teeming with wildlife and small fishing canoes. Many kingdoms have launched futile attempts to seize control of this bay, as it has the potential of developing into a major economic and trade hub. But the fiercely independent Samya people, along with a series of natural disasters, have wreaked havoc on every attempt.

Sampriya Wilderness: This portion of the jungle is perhaps the wildest and most untamed region in all of Devabhumi. Creatures of monstrous proportions roam here, from giant crocodiles known as Hemaraj to the crimson devil bird known as an Ulama. Beyond the jungle is uncharted territory, rumored to be the home of swarms of nagas and poisonous serpents. The

Samya people have built small towns and villages in this region, but they must constantly defend themselves against the countless threats that mark this jungle.

SOUTHERN DEVABHUMI

The mountainous regions of the north ease into gentle hills and flat plateaus as one travels further south, the land growing thicker with vegetation of all kinds. The air is hot and humid nearly year-round. Two small mountain ranges serve as notable landmarks among the miles and miles of flat land.

The rocky Dakkhana Plateau, located in the very heart of the subcontinent, boasts a series of cities, jeweled temples, and shrines with miles and miles of farmland in between. The ancient Rathashakti Plains hold a rich history of famous battles, with ruins of many crumbling forts tucked away in the wild brush.

The Sher Range hugs the west coast of Devabhumi, spawning around it an area full of caves and rolling hills. Mighty horses run free through the highlands, bred and domesticated by the fierce inhabitants of this region. The nearby Jwalapati Range runs parallel to the Sher Range, spearheaded by an unstable volcano. This fiery range is the home of many tributaries that flow further south, nourishing the land with mineral-rich water.

The shorelines further south reveal breathtaking beaches of crystal sands adorned with coconut trees. Many settlements are built along the coast, with their people drawing much of their sustenance from the sea. Inland, much of the land is covered in thick cloud forests. The Vaanar Forest teems with civilized monkey-like creatures known as vaanars, notable for their cleverness and agility.

Lowland regions are sopping with brackish water, teeming with strange wildlife and monsters of all sorts. However, these regions are also responsible for producing much of the rice that feeds the people of Devabhumi.

The Aharum Moorlands is home to a natural swamp that is the brewing place for many plagues that routinely sweep across the land. Many asuras have also made their home here. Despite the harsh landscape, a few hardy folk have built settlements here.

Towards the very southern tip of the subcontinent, a tropical island holds rich stories of gods, demons, adventure, and exile. The island of Thaara is ruled by a powerful nation known for taming wild beasts and building impenetrable fortresses.

AVANTI CONFEDERATION

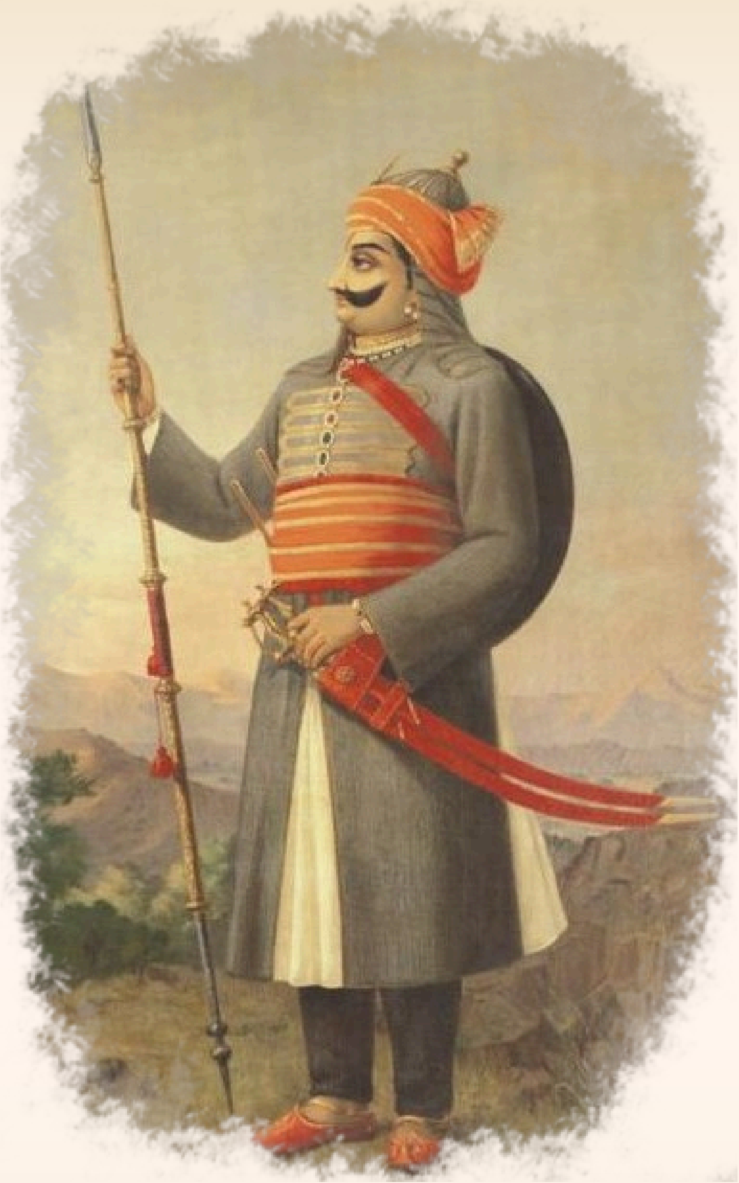
One of the most powerful and influential nations of the south, the Avanti Confederation was once a group of small tribes and clans that inhabited the rugged Sher Range. The hardy people that lived among the caves and mountains relied on raiding the surrounding areas to support themselves. The raiders rode on swift horses that were native to the region, allowing them to strike at a lightning pace and escape larger armies. This style of raiding and escaping back to their caves remained the same until five hundred years ago, when the ambitious Dadarao assumed the title of **Peshwa** (the chief ruler of the Avanti people).

Dadarao saw a greater potential for his people and a military advantage that could conquer large tracts of land at once. Over the course of his lifetime, Dadarao rallied his soldiers and conquered many of the towns and cities around him, stretching into the Dakkhana Plataeu and reaching as far south as the Dandakaranya Forest. The Avanti Kingdom once controlled the largest share of the subcontinent, but their territory has slowly dwindled over the last two hundred years.

The political structure of the nation is complex, owing to the numerous powerful clans that make up the Avanti people. Each clan has a handful of nobles that own tracts of land and command their private armies. Every year, the nobles convene in the capital, Devadutt, and vote on one of them to be the chief ruler of the nation. This ruler is usually the most capable and experienced one of them and is granted the title Peshwa. If the Peshwa arouses too much disapproval from the people or the nobles, then they are deposed and another noble is given the title of Peshwa.

The current Peshwa, **Gajadhaar**, is one of the youngest to assume the title of Peshwa at the age of thirty-eight. The son of a rich noble, he was educated in a Gurukula (school) in Hastinapur and traveled the Dakkhana Plataeu. This provided Gajadhaar with fresh perspectives and opened up his mind to other ways of life. When he became Peshwa, he started many reforms, such as opening up trade with the coastal settlements of the South, creating a conventional standing army like other kingdoms, and opening a Gurukula in his capital city where the future generation can be educated. However, these reforms were not received well by some of the Avanti people.

The Avanti people are proud and martial, owing to their heritage as horse-riding raiders. However, their heritage will soon remain a memory of the past, as many Avanti people have taken up mundane jobs such as artisans, traders, and laborers. The current Peshwa has favored a conventional standing army to protect their conquered land instead of their light cavalry.



Maharana Pratap Singh by Raja Ravi Varma. Public Domain.

There is a minority of people who suggest a return to their old ways, to abandon the cities and return to their homes in the mountains. But this minority is viewed as radical, especially by some of the nobles who have tasted the luxuries of civilization and now refuse to abandon them.

Devadutt: This city is the capital city of the Avanti Confederation. Devadutt used to be a small town nestled in the hills of the Sher Range, where Dadarao was born. During his conquests, he flooded the town with wealth, transforming the small town into a large capital with towering walls. Now, this city is the seat of the current Peshwa and serves as a political hub of the kingdom. Devadutt is notable for its large temples to Shiva and Ganesha, which are symbols for the martial prowess of the kingdom. This city is also known as a hub of trade and breeding of the finest warhorses in Devabhumi. Merchants from across the subcontinent travel to this city to buy these steeds, known as Bhimthadi horses.

Jinkale (formerly Kallapur): This conquered city was once part of the Vindhya Kingdom but fell to the Avantis during the reign of Dadarao. The administrators and upper class of this city are composed entirely of former Avanti raiders. The native Vindhya commoners constitute the rest of the city's population, significantly outnumbering the Avanti minority. Life seemed to improve for the Vindhya people after the city changed hands, as the Avantis were efficient administrators and had a surplus of wealth from raids, which they invested in their cities.

However, Rani Padma of the Vindhya Kingdom seeks to reclaim this city and liberate it from Avanti hands. Such an action would lead to all-out war, which would be dangerous for both nations.

Dhalapani: A coastal trading fortress built on the western side of the Sher Range. This coastal fort is the only Avanti settlement with a naval presence, allowing it to trade with its neighbors and protect its coast. The people of this fort are composed primarily of traders and soldiers, who often mingle with each other.

The city's architecture reflects its dual nature as both a fortress and trade hub. The walls are tall and thick, fortified with towers on all sides. Inside the walls is a crowded maze of markets, residential homes, docks, and barracks for soldiers. Many people seek to visit Dhalapani to walk through their famed markets that feature rare spices, weapons, armor, and even mythical beasts.

Points of Interest:

Shikar Pass: A treacherous mountain pass in the Sher Range that is the fastest route to the sea. This pass is guarded by Avanti raiders, who demand a high toll for anyone that takes this path.

Tejasvi Falls: A mighty cascading waterfall that is rumored to hide a secret cave temple to Surya. According to sages, this is one of the oldest temples to the sun god Surya, and it holds a great reward for those who manage to find it. Many adventurers have attempted to jump through the waterfall, only to meet their deaths at the sharp rocks below.

VINDHYA KINGDOM

This is an ancient kingdom with perhaps one of the longest-lasting dynasties, dating back to the Satya-Yuga. The Rajas and Ranis of old were highly educated and capable rulers, whose rule was so great that even some of the gods would come to live within the kingdom. This period of peace and prosperity was known as the **Maha-Shaasan** (the Great Rule). But the kingdom has slowly dwindled since the end of the Satya-Yuga. Many of the great cities, forts, and temples that were built by the rulers are now ruined or forgotten. The current Vindhya Kingdom is a shell of what it used to be, with corrupt and inefficient administrators, crumbling cities, and a suffering populace.

The altruistic **Padma Rani** rules over the Vindhya Kingdom, but her power is limited by the nobility, who has accumulated quite a bit of power. The Rani watched her father Charan Raja's corrupt rule for the majority of her early life, and when she assumed the throne, she aspired to do better. Her father granted the incessant nobility large tracts of land, influence over cities, and greater freedom to levy troops.

A cruel famine has affected much of the kingdom for the last hundred years, reducing the population by almost half. The once fertile soil has now hardened and cracked, the monsoon has waned, and food reserves are running low. The majority of commoners subsist on a diet of a single piece of bread and a cup of milk.

Much of the commoners and regular folk are uneducated, owing to the lack of Gurukulas and learned sages. They make ends meet with odd jobs, manual labor, or farming. Amidst the existence of a life full of hardship, the people find hope through worship. They organize large festivals where, for a moment, they forget about the present suffering and revel in the tales of Vishnu slaying powerful Asuras, of Krishna's pastimes in his childhood, and of Rama's journey into the forest.

The people of this kingdom are devoted to Vishnu, with many temples and shrines throughout the land. Some of these temples are ancient, but most have been built within the last two hundred years. According to sages, Vishnu was a friend to the ancient Rajas and Ranis during the Maha-Shaasan, as he would walk among the royal gardens and advise the rulers.

Travelers should not expect a grand welcome or much warmth from the commoners like other settlements. They should make an attempt to disguise their wealth if they have a sizable portion and to blend in with the locals.

Vijayanagara: This great city is the capital of the Vindhya people. Once upon a time it used to be the wealthiest city in the subcontinent, with homes made of gold and marble, expensive silks being brought from the east, and mythical beasts being paraded through the streets. But much of this has now faded. This city was besieged and sacked by multiple nations throughout the last thousand years. Each nation carried away a considerable amount of wealth. Now this city is a skeleton of its past, with only the bare essentials of the city left.

The city has two sections, the old city and the new city. The old city is populated by the descendants of nobility, too poor to be considered part of the nobility now. The royal palace of Padma Rani lies here, possibly the only structure left that has a degree of luxury and grandeur. The new city was founded by survivors of the sieges, who built ramshackle homes around the old city and relied on farming the surrounding land. Crime and lawlessness run rampant in the new city, with few guards or militia to keep the peace. Visitors are advised not to linger in the new city and to acquire lodgings in the old city if possible.

Fact or Myth? Vijayanagara was an empire that controlled much of South India from the 1300s to the late 1600s. This kingdom established its own architectural style, developed new technology, and established a cultural influence that would last for many ages. It boasted a population of 18 million at its peak. But the empire declined after a major defeat by its enemies, and much of its grand cities are now ruins.

Points of Interest:

Aranyanagar: A ruined grand city with remnants of three-story palaces, barracks, elephant arenas, and hundreds of crumbling homes. Colonies of chattering monkeys climb over the overgrown stone tiles that once paved this city. This city has been looted repeatedly by scavengers, but rumor is that fragments of buried treasure still lie here undisturbed.

Kanipinchani Lake: Also known as the Invisible Lake, the exact location of this lake is unknown. It is believed that this lake becomes visible only once a month during a full moon. A trio of Yakshis live under the lake, and they will reward any adventurer that manages to find them.

Temple of a Thousand Pillars: These mysterious ruins stand high atop a hill, shrouded in thick fog and surrounded by rocky boulders. The remnants of the pillars bear carvings of different devas and devis. Sages believe that this temple used to hold a thousand different gods, with a section for each one. Now, a tribe of Vaanars has taken residence here, harnessing the mysterious power that lingers here.

DANDA KINGDOM

This rich kingdom is nestled along the southwestern coast and surrounded by the Tara and Tarini rivers. All of its three main cities are located along the sea or a river. The Danda Kingdom boasts naval supremacy throughout the land, as they are known for their durable ships that are capable of sailing through the tempestuous waters of the Great Churning.

Trade and exploration are the two pillars on which this kingdom stands. There was once a time where this kingdom was a loose collection of towns and villages, and the people lived in relative obscurity. The recent discovery of sea routes that circumnavigate the subcontinent by two brave fishermen transformed this ragtag collection of towns into a proper kingdom. Nanmaran and Srivallabha, the two fishermen, assumed the title of co-monarchs. When both rulers married and had children, conflict arose over who would reign after them. This led to Nanmaran assassinating Srivallabha and his offspring in an elaborate plot, setting a precedent for the ruthless monarchs that followed after him.

Thondaman Raja is the ruler of the Dandas, perhaps one of the most dangerous jobs in the kingdom. Thondaman assassinated his father and brother to secure the throne for himself, but he has also been the victim of multiple unsuccessful assassinations organized by his cousins. The rulers of this kingdom have a history of patricide and fratricide, with sons killing their fathers and brothers to claim the throne for themselves.

Thondaman Raja is a cold, calculating king with his eyes set on the dwindling Vindhya Kingdom to the north. The Raja has an affinity for hunting boars, a pastime which he enjoys on horseback. If not in his royal palace, he can be found in the Dandakaranya Forest, surrounded by nobles on organized hunts.

Many of the Danda people are traders and explorers by nature, traveling to distant lands and constantly seeking new trade routes. Some of the most famous explorers of Devabhumi have come from the Danda Kingdom. If anyone is heard speaking the southern language of *Parthiva* in the north or east, it is most likely that the person came from the Danda Kingdom. Not everyone is capable of traveling to far lands, however, as most people satisfy their curiosity by learning from travelers. People who visit the Danda Kingdom may find themselves assailed by questions from the people about their journeys, their homeland, and their family.

Amarapuram: The immortal city, the beacon of the south, Amarapuram is the crown jewel of the Danda Kingdom. This coastal city was once a small fishing village named Minnivara. It wasn't until a duo of adventurous fishermen discovered a trade route through the Great Churning that the village transformed into a city. This small fishing village found itself at the crossroads of trade between the massive kingdoms of the north and the coastal kingdoms of the south. Minnivara transformed into Amarapuram, and this city swelled with merchants, artisans, and adventurers from across all Devabhumi. Amarapuram became the new capital of the Danda Kingdom, and a grand palace was erected in the center of the city. Amarapuram is notable for a powerful forge known as the Agnibhaavak, which is an ancient forge powered by Agni himself. Any weapon or armor crafted in this forge possesses extraordinary strength and durability.

Vallaipallam (vuh-ley-paa-lum): This countryside town has a number of beautiful homes, adorned with many gardens and trees of pomegranate, bananas, and mangoes. Flower gardens and fruit orchards are meticulously planted in concentric circles in a fertile mound that is rumored to be the birthplace of the esteemed sage Kashyapa. This town is quite valuable for the Danda Kingdom, as it generates rare trade goods that reach as far north as Hastinapur.

Kappalnakaram (kuh-pal-nuh-kuh-rum): When traders from Amarapuram found out that they could save a week of travel and avoid the dangerous current of the Tara River delta, they built a settlement on the west coast of Devabhumi that would allow for easy access to the Purvaja Sea. The most skilled shipbuilders were recruited from across the subcontinent to build a fleet of trade ships and warships, making this city a hub of maritime trade for the Danda Kingdom. Kappalnakaram sits along a tropical beach, with numerous docks and a busy shipbuilding yard. Seasonal markets along the docks feature numerous trade goods from all across Devabhumi.

VAANAR FOREST

This mystical forest is home to talking monkey-like creatures known as vaanars (see **Races**), rarely seen outside their homes. A strong familial bond connects vaanars with their immediate family and relatives. These familial ties build up to large clans in which there is some blood relation between clan members. For a vaanar, their clan is the source of their identity; it provides all that the vaanar would ever need to live a happy and prosperous life.

The Vaanar Forest, also known as **Punyachaitra** (pun-yah-chey-trah) by its native inhabitants, is a dense cloud forest imbued with magic that can mislead and captivate visitors. This forest is home to nightmarish creatures such as the Ulama and Bhramrachok, hidden temples to Hanuman, and numerous clans of vaanars. A typical vaanar clan is organized into smaller villages that spread over miles and miles of territory. The largest village houses the chief elder, who establishes control over the clan and guides their people in difficulty.

Hanuman is the vaanar god of strength, loyalty, and wisdom. He is the famous companion to the god Rama, an avatar of Vishnu. According to scriptures, Hanuman led thousands of vaanars to accompany Rama and rescue his wife Sita from a demonic king. Hanuman is widely worshiped by vaanars, who have built countless shrines and temples in the Vaanar Forest.

Angada Clan: This is the largest and most widespread clan in the forest, boasting more than ten thousand vaanars in their cities. This clan traces its ancestry to Sugriva, an ancient vaanar king that aided the god Rama in his adventures. The current chief elder of this clan is **Suri**, an aged vaanar whose face resembles a dried fruit with a great deal of wrinkles. Suri is a moderate, soft-spoken chief who speaks very little, but each word is full of rich meaning and metaphor. He seeks to keep peace with the neighboring clans, which constantly try to poke at the Angada Clan and test their strength.

The vaanars of the Angada Clan are noble and stoic in their behavior, seeking to imitate their king Sugriva. They wear loose garments made with banana leaves and adorn their arms with gold bracelets. The Angada vaanars are vegetarian, with their diet consisting of cooked vegetables, roots, and berries. Their society emphasizes strength, honor, and quietly bearing discomfort.

A growing number of vaanars seek to reestablish the kingdom of Sugriva, pushing for war with neighboring clans and even advancing its borders outside of the forest. This sentiment is not reciprocated by the current chief, Suri. Visitors to the Angada Clan are rare but are welcomed as long as they remain respectful and refrain from eating animals.

Yugyuva Clan: The Yugyuva vaanars were once wise and righteous. Many of the heroes that fought in Rama's army came from this clan, which was notable for the wisdom and courage of its warriors. Now, this clan is a twisted mockery of what it once was. The vaanars are possessed by demons known as yakkas (see **Monsters**), causing them to develop a deep bloodlust and terrorize surrounding tribes.

The story of the possession begins less than twenty years ago, when a young vaanar was exploring the ruins of a village and stumbled across a well that still had water in it. Despite hearing whispers coming from the well, the thirsty vaanar drank the water and became the first victim of the yakkas. When the vaanar returned to her tribe, the host of yakkas infected the rest of the vaanars.

The possession has caused frightening changes in the vaanars: long hooked claws, two fangs that poke out of their mouth, an inability to feel pain or fear, and a shrill cry to signal the presence of new victims. The minds of the possessed vaanars have deteriorated and turned animalistic, with language and most forms of communication being lost. There is no central leadership to the clan since it has descended into anarchy. The vaanars sometimes fight each other, but they usually venture out in small troops to attack a surrounding tribe. The Yugyuva vaanars will tear apart any living creature, no matter how big or small.

There are hundreds of clans in the Vaanar Forest and all of them would be difficult to list. Some of these clans are more warlike than others, and others are more welcoming to visitors. One vaanar clan may ambush and capture the players while another clan seeks to welcome them to their humble village. Use the following table to build a vaanar clan and determine their leader, ideals, and distinguishing traits.

Clan Elder (d6)

1. Gadadhar, a brave vaanar who likes to fight at the head of his tribe
2. Jeevi, a young vaanar who was chosen for her exceptional ability to tell fortune
3. Nila, a sly vaanar who prefers using trickery
4. Uma, an extremely strong vaanar who regularly wrestles bears
5. Chatur, a well-traveled vaanar who has seen what the outside world has to offer
6. Mantra, a pious vaanar who is a devotee to Hanuman and Rama

Ideal (d6)

1. **Nature**. Our aim is to live one with the earth, to protect our home in the trees, to keep our land undefiled.
2. **War**. Only the strong survive, and the heat of battle is the best way to weed out the weak.
3. **Knowledge**. We hold a mastery over medicinal herbs, magical roots, religious mantras, and other forgotten knowledge.
4. **Independence**. We will bow to no one but the gods.
5. **Religion**. We are devotees to Hanuman and seek to follow his example in all aspects of life.
6. **Community.** Our strength comes from the unity of our tribe and the cooperation of all its members.

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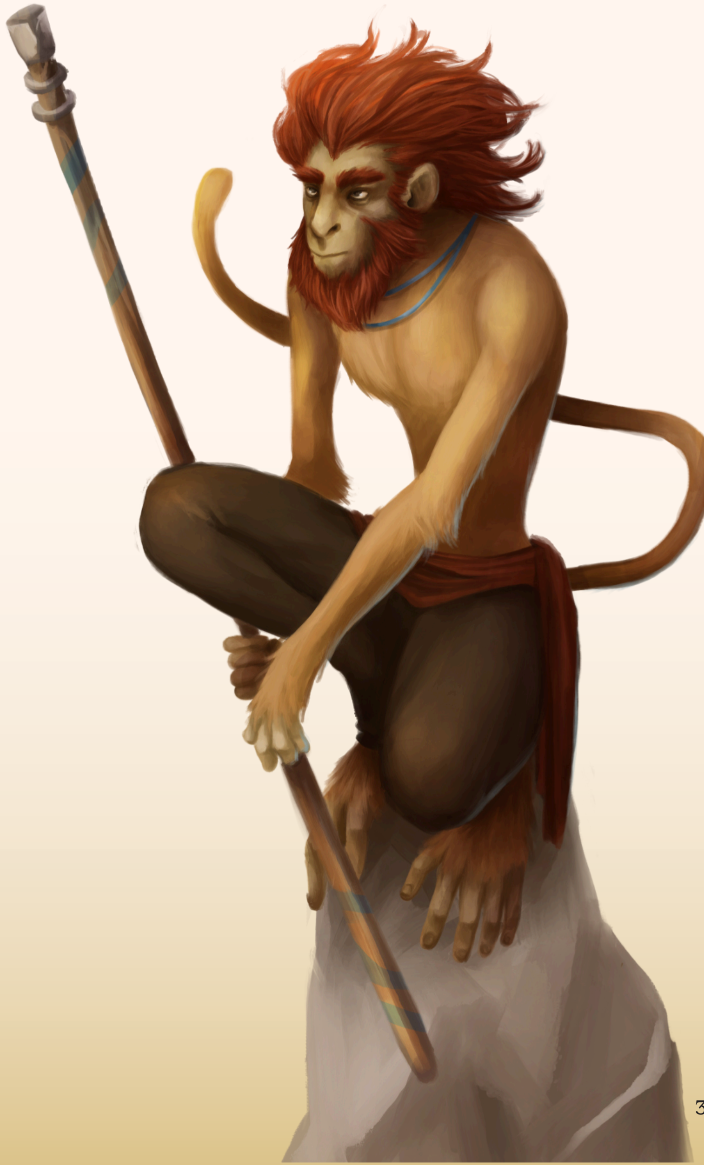
Unique Traits (d6)

1. These vaanars possess a pale, almost-white fur.
2. The warriors of this clan adorn themselves with the ashes of the slain.
3. These vaanars do not cover themselves with clothes, preferring to keep their fur long and thick instead.
4. These vaanars wear colorful stones and wooden beads in their hair.
5. The hunters of this clan have green moss growing on their fur, allowing them to blend in with the environment.
6. These vaanars wear crowns of flowers, distinguishing their special status.



Vaanar by Alessia Fiorenz

KINGDOM OF THAARA

This island kingdom is situated on the island of Thaara, the southernmost point of Devabhumi. The island is a lush jungle surrounded by open plains, rocky cliffs, and coral reefs. A great host of temples, shrines, and ruins are scattered across the wilderness, bearing witness to the ancient civilizations that marked this place.

The history of this island is a rich and complex one, switching hands between many rulers.This island has been ruled by mortals, asuras, and even gods at one point. Perhaps the most famous king to rule over this island was Ravana, an asura who abducted the wife of Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu. Ravana's kingdom was marked with marvelous cities built of gold and marble, grand temples to Shiva, and an army of a hundred thousand. After Ravana was slain, his brother Vibhishana ruled the throne.

Ravana: During the Treta-Yuga, there once lived a powerful asura king named Ravana, who ruled over much of the island kingdom of Thaara. According to the stories of the Ramayana, Ravana abducted the wife of god Rama, who was an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. The Ramayana follows the long adventure of Rama, who journeys to this island with an army of vaanars, slaying Ravana and rescuing his wife Sita.

Thaara is currently ruled by **Amaya Rani**, a ruler whose origins are steeped in legends and folk tales. The most common story recalls Amaya being the daughter of a Raja who lived across the sea on the mainland of Devabhumi. After angering the sea god Varuna by executing an innocent priest, the Raja determined that the only way to appease Varuna was to offer him a sacrifice. He put the young Amaya on a boat, who was only a few years of age, and let her drift into the deep blue sea.

Varuna did not let the girl drown, however, and safely escorted her to the island of Thaara, where she was raised by a family of fishermen. The girl possesses an unusual charisma and wisdom, which made her popular among the people. One day, Amaya was noticed by a young prince who was touring the countryside, and he proposed for her hand in marriage. After agreeing to the marriage, Amaya lived in the royal palace but spent most of her time with the ordinary commoners that lived in the capital. When the prince died, it was determined that Amaya would make the best ruler, and she was freely given the throne.

Jayatu Vadham by Raja Ravi Varma, 1895. Public Domain.

The people of Thaara are known for taming the mythical beasts known as gajasimhas, half lion and half elephant, and riding upon these creatures during battle. Lion-themed imagery is a repeating theme among the art and architecture here, with some people even getting tattoos of regal lion figures.

There are two main cities that comprise the kingdom of Thaara. There is the coastal Katalmakkal, also known as the city of the sea people, and the Vanamakkal, which is also referred to as the city of the forest people. The cities are roughly equal in size, and the capital of the kingdom switches back and forth between the cities to avoid angering the populace. The current Amaya Rani's kingdom is situated in Katalmakkal, with a clear view to the ocean that brought her to this island.

Katalmakkal (kuh-tul-muh-kul): This coastal city is the capital of the Thaara Kingdom. It features a busy wharf full of fishermen that harvest the rich coral reefs surrounding the island, five large residential districts that house the city's fifty thousand denizens, a large royal palace, and a recent temple to Varuna, which was commissioned by Amaya Rani to thank the sea god for protecting her.

This city is unique in that it contains a minority of Zhav nomads, who have managed to sail to this port in order to trade and settle. Katalmakkal is as a hub for trade and commerce, also serving as a proud work of art for distant travelers.

Vanamakkal (van-ah-muh-kul): This city is surrounded by thick jungle and poisonous wilderness, with only two dangerous roads leading to it. Despite its location, it has perhaps the most advanced irrigation system in all of Devabhumi. Large bathhouses, gardens, pools, and rice farms are constructed within the city, with most of the population tending to one of these.

A training arena serves as a place for domestication of the gajasimha, which are captured and brought here from the surrounding jungle. Many of the soldiers in Thaara's standing army reside here, ready to march at a moment's notice to defend the island. Two large statues of grizzled warrior-kings notably rise above the walls, reminding the traveler about the martial might of the kingdom.

Kaedapat Fort (key-duh-pat): This unique fort is built in the middle of the plains, surrounded by tall thirty-foot walls that are covered in mirrors. This renders the fort invisible from a distance. Large paw prints near the entrance signify that the fort is protected by lions of monstrous proportions, native to Thaara.

Since the inception of this fort five hundred years ago, not a single rival nation has managed to capture it. Foreign armies in the past have found that the greatest battle is reaching the fort itself. Once inside, the fort holds numerous stables for horses and gajasimhas, which are the only ways to safely travel in the plains. The majority of the fort's inhabitants are soldiers, but a small minority of citizens serve as artisans, smiths, and hunters.

Points of Interest:

Cave of Kubera: This cave is hidden deep within the hills and mountains of Thaara, rumored to hold a great deal of wealth left behind by Kubera, the half brother of the famous demon Ravana. This cave is supposedly guarded by numerous Dvarapala (see **Monsters**) left behind by Kubera to protect his wealth.

Pushpaka Crash Site: Deep within the lush tropical forest lie the ruins of Ravana's flying chariot, the Pushpaka Vimana. The power of this legendary chariot was famously chronicled in stories, with claims that it could travel from Thaara to the Aakashparvat Mountains in a few hours and that it can fly all the way to the heavens. However, this vehicle was destroyed in the battle between Rama and Ravana. Legend has it that many magical contraptions that powered this chariot still remain viable, and particularly useful if one wanted to build their own flying chariot.

The Great Churning

This region of the Purvaja Sea is where the legendary **Samudra Manthan** (the Great Churning) took place. According to the scriptures, the Devas and the Asuras worked together to churn the ocean with a massive island in order to obtain Amrita, the immortal elixir of life. Many creatures and monsters arose out of the Samudra Manthan, such as the seven-headed Uchaishrava.

The Devas went back to the heavens and the Asuras to the underworld, but this region of the sea remained in a constant state of churning. Fierce cyclones, whirlpools, and thunderstorms are present throughout this region, making it nearly impossible for ships to pass through. Protected by the tumultuous sea, however, is a chain of undisturbed islands with unique creatures, riches, and a complex civilization.

The Garuda Isles

Dense clouds roll over a tropical chain of islands remarkable for their population of birds of all kinds. Many songbirds, waterbirds, and birds of prey are native to these islands. But the isles are also home to the greatest of all birds, the remarkable garudas. These highly intelligent birds form colonies on various islands in the chain, conducting trade, diplomacy, and war with each other. The relative closeness of the isles makes it very easy for the Garudas to travel from one island to the next, avoiding the tempestuous water and rocky shoreline.

According to sages, the garudas were descendants of the sage Kashyapa, making them half brothers with the snake-like nagas. The garudas are proud, independent eagle-like creatures that build their colonies on treetops or high cliffsides. Their societies are built on hunting and nesting, and they fiercely guard their territories against any intruders. Ardent devotees to Vishnu, the garudas build elaborate cave temples and shrines inside of trees where they can worship their creator-god. The total number of garuda colonies on this island chain is in the hundreds, but the largest and most notable colonies are listed below.

Gyanarya Colony: This cliffside colony is situated along Dharam Bay, on the largest island in the chain. The homes of the garudas are carved into the cliffside with a complex tapestry of ledges and aeries that hang over the unruly sea. To go from one gravity-defying ledge to another requires the ability to fly, and visitors without that ability may find it very difficult to navigate the colony. The garudas routinely go on dangerous hunts in the ocean, swooping down on marine creatures such as fish, coral snakes, and even small sharks. A hunter of the Gyanarya Colony enjoys a life full of prestige and constant danger.

The colony is not ruled by a formal king but rather by an elder garuda called a Vidyadhara. This elder is responsible for settling disputes, performing rituals to Vishnu, and rallying the colony to war. The current Vidyadhara of this colony is **Paksha Rishi**, an ancient garuda of almost 150 years. Paksha Rishi lost his eyes from being stabbed by a swordfish in his early years, but he now has a keen ability to notice the surroundings through his other senses. According to other garudas, Paksha Rishi can also determine if someone is lying, aiding him greatly in settling disputes.

Sadhana Colony: This treetop colony is located on one of the smaller islands to the north, among a thicket of ancient trees. The island is home to hundreds of species of various trees, orchids, ferns, and other wildlife, many of which have medicinal properties. The garudas of this colony are skilled in their knowledge of identifying plants and treating various ailments.

The treetops host numerous wooden constructions containing nests and dwelling quarters of the garudas, connected by netting and vines to prevent the young fledgelings from falling. Visitors are not foreign to the colony, consisting mainly of shipwrecked sailors. As a result, some dwelling spaces have been constructed close to the ground, with plenty of ladders and ropes.

The Vidyadhara of this colony is Madhu Rishi, a kind and ceremonious garuda. She shows kindness to all living creatures, especially those in need of aid. Many lost foreigners have drifted upon the shores of her island, and Madhu Rishi has always been quick to offer aid. When a nearby garuda tribe had been threatening the colony, Madhu Rishi personally flew to the potentially hostile tribe with a few bodyguards to make efforts to secure peace and prevent bloodshed. Visitors to this colony will be treated kindly, as long as they show respect and gratitude to their hosts.

Nastasva Clan: This is a small clan of asuras that harbor a deep resentment for the gods and other asuras as a result of being forgotten during the Great Churning. Legend has it that when the churning first took place, all the gods and asuras were invited to work together to harvest Amrita—the immortal nectar—but a tiny clan of lesser asuras were not invited. The gods and asuras benefited from the Amrita, adding to their power, except the Nastava Clan.

The Nastava asuras lack the spellcasting abilities and prolonged lifespan of other asuras, but they have a single-minded desire to amass power and exact revenge upon those who cheated them. Many of them meditate and perform severe penances to the gods, seeking a powerful boon such as an Astra. But this has not been acquired yet. Others raid the islands and the sea, letting their hatred loose on mortals who happened to cross their path.

The asuras of the Nastava Clan reside in rocky caves and deep tunnels next to the shore, providing them with an almost impregnable defense. Their hidden location allows them to venture out to sea at a moment's notice or to ambush a soar of flying garudas. Relying on crafty engineering to construct fortified boats, automatic bows, and powerful siege weapons, these asura pirates can wreak havoc on a traveling ship.

JALPURUSH

Contribution by Stephen Sewell

Within the Great Churning of Devabhumi, there swims a Divine Turtle who is considered to be an avatar of the god Vishnu. Those who have heard the legend of its grandeur regard this mystical landmark as **Magnah Pravatah,** the sinking mountain. On the turtle's back, a gargantuan mountain reaches for the heavens.

Decorating Magnah Pravatah is a dense tropical landscape that appears to be a blue-green swirl from a distance. The turtle's blood flows through plants and animals, making them glow with divinity's cerulean mark. Simmering springs of amrita, the nectar of immortality, nourish this supernatural habitat as their revitalizing liquids drip down the mountainside from the upper regions of Magnah Pravatah.

Magnah Pravatah's **Amar Udyan**, a paradisal garden of concentric rings of flowers with a pond and fountain of amrita at its center, benefits from the irrigation of several of these springs. A group of Saraswati's favorite Apsaras serve as Amar Udyan's caretakers and stewards of the human population that has embedded itself in the mountainside.

These humans, who live on Magnah Pravatah, form a nation called Jalpurush. Jalpurushans are unique among the humans of Devabhumi, the Apsara have used their aquatic powers to bless Jalpurush as children of the sea. A Jalpurushan can breathe underwater and withstand the god turtle's descent into the Great Churning. Jalpurushans have an expressive, epicurean culture inspired by their guardian Apsrara's enchanting dance and song.

On Magnah Pravatah, creativity is expressed in every aspect of life, music fills the air, and festivals frequently fill the bellies of everyone from the highest priest to the humblest peasant. Every individual in Jalpurush society is an artist, and they approach every activity, be it farming, construction, or waging war, with an artistic touch.

Jalpurushans do not aspire to take the essence of the amrita for themselves, for they are surrounded by the grandeur of the gods and are blessed by their Apsaras, graciously accepting of their mortal place in the cycle of life. That isn't to say the holy nectar of the Amar Udyan is not a target for more ambitious adventurers, but to this day, no one has reportedly accomplished such a journey.

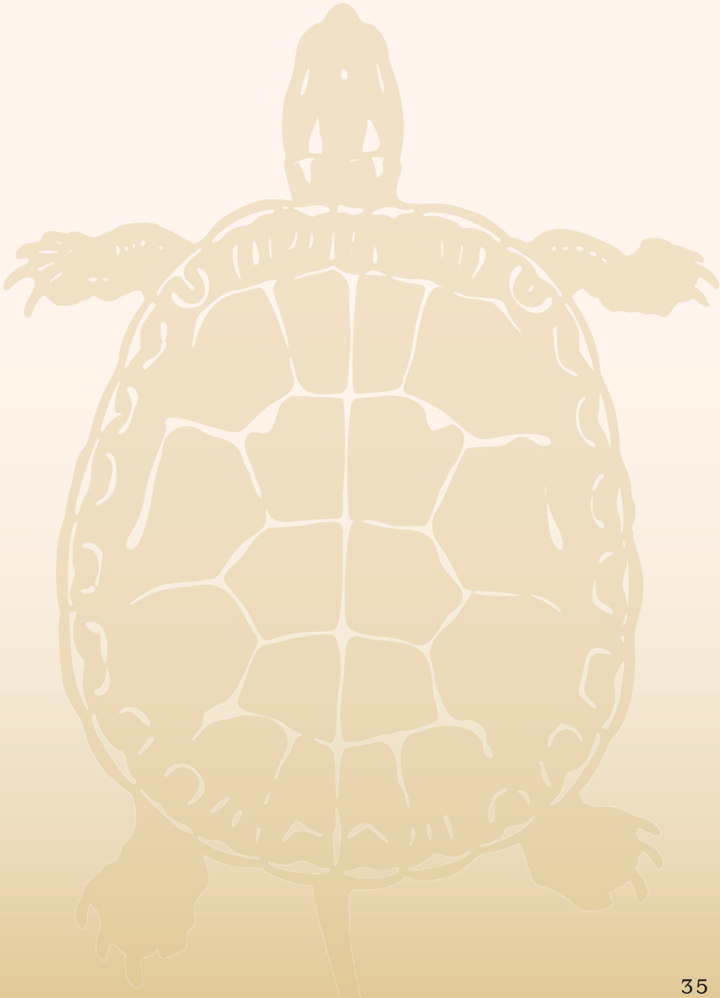
Not only is it rare that anyone successfully navigates to the God Turtle, but the Apsara's beguiling beauty and charm swiftly convince these wayward adventurers of their folly for lusting over such power. After succumbing to the Apsara's charm, these adventurers join the nation-tribe of Jalpurush, prepared to utilize their magic and weapons for the mountain's protection. For those who defy the Apsara, their fates are unknown.

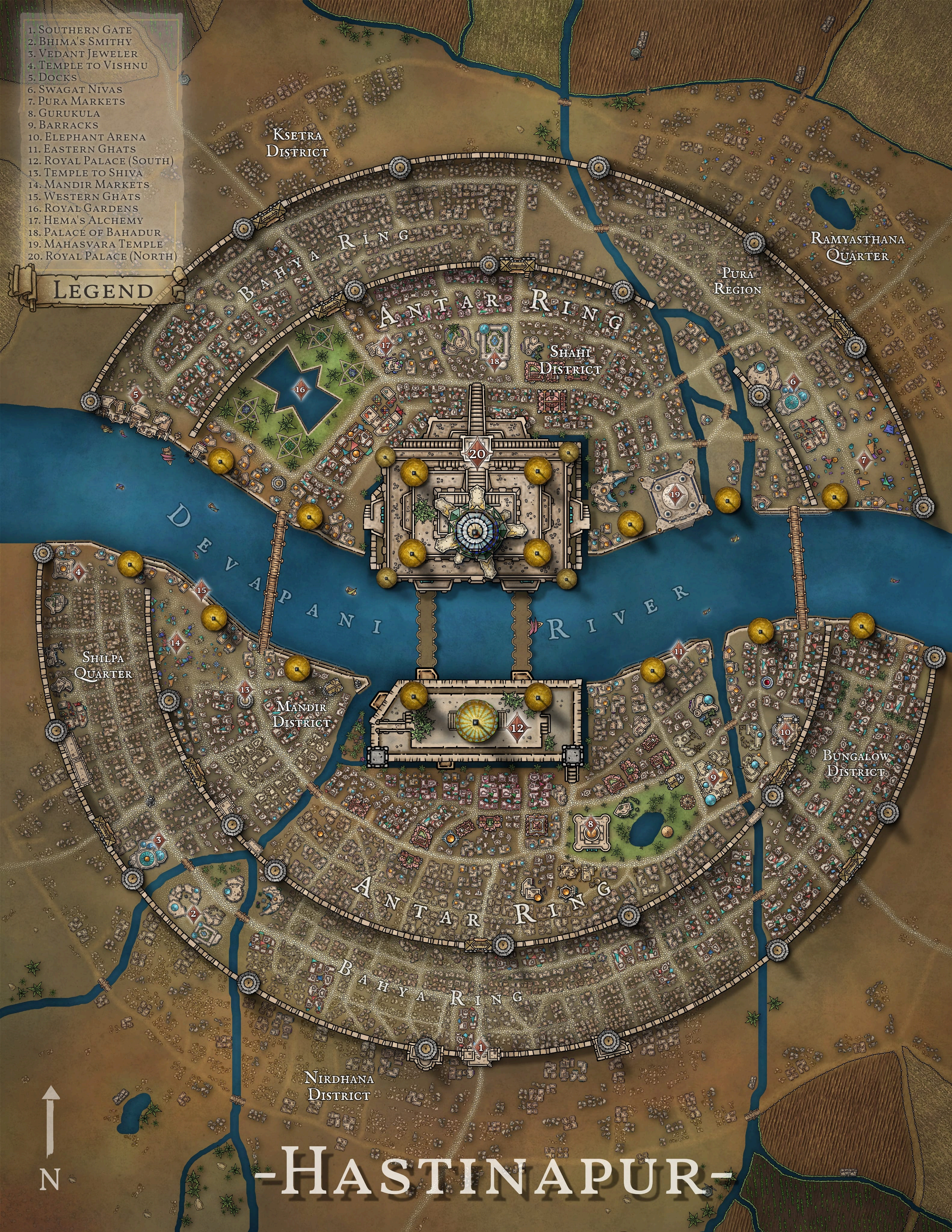
Living in the presence of an avatar of Vishnu, and blessed by Saraswati's favorite Apsaras has led most of Jalpurush to believe they are uniquely superior to the rest of human civilization. Their closest neighbor and trading partner is the regicidal kingdom of Danda. To the privileged Jalpurush, the Danda are the epitome of the chaotic, sinful continental nations. Jalpurushans, despite having a trading post in Amarapuram, consider the culture of Danda and other continental kingdoms to be inherently inferior.

Devakurmapuram (deh-vah-kur-mah-poo-ram): Carved into the sides of Magnah Pravatah is the Devakurmapuram, the City of the God Turtle. Every palace, statue, and home in the City of the God Turtle is a manifestation of the Jalpurushan's unique architectural style and construction practices.

Devakurmapuram is unlike most other cities in Devabhumi. Built upon the God Turtle's back, Devakurmapuram is a city of abundance. Hunger and poverty are far from the minds of even the poorest who live in Jalpurush. Every building in the city, whether it is an ornate temple, stoic bastion, or village hamlet, is weaved into the jungle flora of Magnah Pravatah's forests, creating a seamless blend of the artificial and natural.

Gardens commonly grow atop roofs and windowsills, and as structures rise up the side of the mountain, communal aqueducts pass over them, serving both a practical need for water and creating artistic waterfalls that serve as a mode of worship. This city is detailed further in the Cities chapter.




1. Southern Gate
2. Bhima's Smithy
3. Vedant Jeweler
4. Temple to Vishnu
5. Docks
6. Swagat Nivas
7. Pura Markets
8. Gurukula
9. Barracks
10. Elephant Arena
11. Eastern Ghats
12. Royal Palace (South)
13. Temple to Shiva
14. Mandir Markets
15. Western Ghats
16. Royal Gardens
17. Hema's Alchemy
18. Palace of Bahadur
19. Mahasvara Temple
20. Royal Palace (North)
Legend
Ksetra District
Bahya Ring
Antar Ring
Shahi District
Pura Region
Ramyasthana Quarter
Devapani River
Shilpa Quarter
Mandir District
Bungalow District
Antar Ring
Bahya Ring
Nirdhana District
N
-Hastinapur-

Cities

HASTINAPUR

Woodsmoke billows overhead as children run through narrow streets. Men gather in street corners to play games of chance and strategy, chewing on betelnut leaves. Women talk under the shade of colored awnings, and cows wander unhindered through the dense crowds. An occasional chariot may be seen on the street, drawn by powerful horses and drawing admiration from the crowd. Bands of pilgrims clad in saffron robes make their way to the sacred Devapani River to immerse their bodies and wipe clean their misdeeds. Far in the distance, a towering palace made of gold and marble can be seen jutting through the walls.

Welcome to the ancient Indian city of **Hastinapur**, the city over which the legendary Mahabharata war was fought. It is a place where the gods rode through the streets, where millions of inhabitants once lived, and where travelers and merchants from all over Devabhumi came to visit. Now, this city is a skeleton of what it once was. The population numbers to a few hundred thousand, and the last time a god was seen riding through the streets was over a thousand years ago.

Large fifty-foot circular stone walls divide the city into multiple rings and districts. Watchtowers placed along regular intervals provide defense from all directions. The city is divided in half by the sacred Devapani River. This river has a strong current with many fierce rapids and waterfalls, preventing large-scale invasion by an intruding navy. Smaller tributaries flow into the river through the city, providing water for drinking and bathing. A complex drainage system helps manage seasonal flooding. Large swathes of farmland surround the city, with its fertile soil owing to the minerals deposited by the Devapani River.

The majority of Hastinapur's population lives outside the city walls, in the Nirdhana (neer-dhuh-nuh), Ksetra (shh-et-ruh), and Ramyasthena (ram-yah-steh-na) districts. These people are farmers and herders whose livelihoods depend on the land beyond the city. The first ring of the city is the **Bahya Ring** (bah-yah). This ring is home to many of the city's artisans, merchants, and other skilled laborers. The second ring is known as the **Antar Ring** (un-tur), which contains the royal palace, temples, barracks, and the homes of nobles. One can cross the Devapani River via either of the wooden bridges in the Antar Ring or hire a ferry along the river bank. Two stone bridges connect the north and south wings of the royal palace, which are usually closed to the public. Detailed below are the points of interest.

1. Southern Gate: This is the main gate in Hastinapur, connecting to roads that lead south and west. Large sentries on either side of the gate watch over the people entering and leaving the city.

2. Bhima's Smithy: This is the shop of the famous blacksmith Bhima, a powerfully built middle-aged man with long graying hair and a knack for joking with customers. Bhima has a young apprentice named **Kavita**, who is secretly a naga disguised in its human form. Kavita was captured by hunters who wanted her meena gem but managed to run away and disguise herself as a human. One can find rare weapons and armor here, such as the Chilta Hazar Nakh (see Armor).

3. Vedant Jeweler: An upscale jewelry store run by two twins—Narendralal and Urmilabai—that sells gold, diamonds, rubies, and other precious gems. Narendralal is in search of adventurers who can travel to the mythical city of Sadhana, the capital of the Neenalag Kingdom deep in the Hira Mountains, to retrieve valuable Meena gems for him. If he discovers Kavita's hidden identity, he will pay mercenaries to capture her. He is willing to pay a large sum for this gem.

4. Temple to Vishnu: This is a large square marble temple with two stories. Relief carvings of the exterior depict events from the various incarnations of Vishnu. Two carvings of wheel spokes on the east and west walls refer to Vishnu's divine chariot. The first story of the temple holds statues to Rama, Krishna, Narasimha, and other incarnations of Vishnu. The second story of the temple holds two large golden statues of Vishnu and Lakshmi.

Pandit Balram is the main priest of this temple, taking care of it for the last forty-five years. Pandit Balram is known for his kindness and charity towards visitors, even offering free lodging for the night as long as they are willing to eat the temple's vegetarian food.

Unbeknownst to any mortals, the pandit is in possession of an Agniastra (see **Astras**). The mantra to access this powerful weapon was passed to him by his guru Ashoka, who lived almost a thousand years and witnessed the Mahabharata War. Pandit Balram has been gravely concerned due to the rise of the Asura

Queen, as he fears the coming of the Kali-Yuga. He is in search of a student worthy enough to possess the knowledge of this astra, one who is willing to defend dharma and uphold the teachings of Vishnu.

5. Docks: This dockyard serves as a hub of trade and fish for Hastinapur. Many traders embark from this city to sail downriver to smaller settlements of the Kuru Kingdom with their sailboats, often returning by foot as the fierce current of the Devapani River prevents travel upstream. Fishermen take their small boats upriver beyond the city and end their journey at these docks. If they miss this point, they can still disembark at the ghats that are further down the river. According to locals, large man-eating crocodiles have been spotted emerging from the docks at night, but these stories have not been confirmed.

6. Swagat Nivas: This two-storied inn is perhaps the largest in Hastinapur, with over twenty beds, baths, and a common-area for travelers to rest and mingle. It features a communal sleeping area providing a low-cost option to rest, along with twenty private beds along with the amenities that come with a room. The inn also features a dining area that serves exclusively vegetarian food, providing an attractive spot for religious pilgrims. The cost to stay in a private room is 1 gp, while the cost of the communal sleeping area is 2 sp. Every evening in the common areas, the inn is a hotbed of rumors, traveling adventurers and pilgrims, and news of the day-to-day happenings in the city.

7. Pura Market: One of the two main markets in Hastinapur, the Pura Market features a variety of food, spices, silks, and trade goods. It is also a market for wandering merchants who bring weapons and armor from far away. One may even purchase fine horses and chariots here, brought by merchants from the west.

8. Gurukula: This school is the largest gurukula in Hastinapura, reserved exclusively for the children of nobles and rich merchants who can afford the high price. The gurukula features a large three-story building with lodging and amenities for students, smaller buildings for training and instruction, and a central pond. **Guru Kripa** instructs the students in religion, history, and natural science.

9. Barracks: A large, two-story barracks that serves as a base of operations for the city's soldiers and part of the Kuru Kingdom's standing army. **Rana Kumar** serves as the general of the army, a distinguished warrior whose ancestors fought in the Mahabharata. Rana Kumar is a capable commander who has secretly dealt with a heavy heart for the last two months. His daughter, **Leela Kumari**, was abducted by thugee bandits (see **Factions**) who demand a hefty ransom of hundreds of horses, chariots, weapons, and armor from the kingdom's armory

Although he is loyal to his king, he is willing to go to any lengths to see his daughter again. He is looking for trustworthy adventurers who can deliver the ransom to the bandits and escort his daughter back safely—a job that is not possible by regular soldiers.

10. Elephant Arena: A walled compound with an open space for training war elephants that are used in the armies of the Kuru Kingdom. Older elephants or those who have been injured in war are sold at a discounted rate to the highest bidder. It is also possible to purchase elephant armor and weapons here.

11. Eastern Ghats: A set of stone stairs leading into a shallow portion of the Devapani River, where numerous people perform last rites for their dead. Locals have reported strange sounds at night and sightings of undead bhootas with backwards-facing feet. If one were to ask a sage, they would explain that some funeral rites were not performed completely (or corpses of murdered people were discarded here), leading to the strange sightings here.

12. Royal Palace (South): This ornate palace stands three stories above the ground, with a silver-lined staircase going into the royal gates. Two stone bridges connect the southern portion of the palace with the northern one. These bridges are typically closed to the public but opened on certain holidays, such as Holi.

This palace houses the two brothers of Ashwa Raja, **Amit** and **Dhal**, their mother, **Subhadra**, and their families. Amit is next in line for the throne, a pious man that is greatly devoted to Shiva, but the younger brother Dhal is an envious prince who is hurt and saddened by the success of his older brother. The Kuru Kingdom has seen a long, disastrous war before due to an inheritance conflict between two brothers, and the people will not support such a conflict now. As a result, Dhal is open to more underhanded methods of securing the throne for himself.

13. Temple to Shiva: This temple possesses only one room but stands at an impressive height of thirty feet. The large statue of Shiva is twenty-five feet tall, and the priests require ladders to offer sacrifices and perform worship rituals to the god. This temple is home to the **Aghoris**, a sect of Shiva-worshippers who believe that the world is an illusion and live an ascetic lifestyle. Shankar Baba is the leader of the Aghoris, an enigmatic man who covers himself in the ash of cremated bodies and wears long braided locs. Despite his physical appearance, Shankar Baba has a deep knowledge of the threats and secrets that lie hidden within this city, including Dhal's desire to seize the throne for himself.

14. Mandir Markets: This crowded marketplace is settled in between the Temple of Shiva and the Western Ghats. It features a number of religious items, jewelry, incense, and small trinkets. The occasional magic item may be found here, along with delicious street food and snacks.

Quest Idea: *The Right Spice*. The Mandir Markets feature a variety of spices from different parts of the subcontinent. Unfortunately, some merchants have resorted to adulterating spices or selling imitations of it in order to make a profit. Can the players find the right spice needed for a recipe, or will it fall flat?

15. Western Ghats: These ghats lead into a deeper part of the Devapani River, which makes it a hub for ferries. One may pay a ferry to transport them across the river on their boat, which is usually rowed by one person. The rate depends on the size of the vessel and the number of people needing transport, but it averages out to 2 cp per person.

16. Royal Gardens: These gardens are filled with trees and flowers of different colors, grass walkways, and a central fountain full of water lilies and lotus flowers. These gardens are open to the public on most days, charging a fee of 5 cp to enter. Occasionally, a member of the royal court is seen taking a walk through these gardens.

17. Hema's Alchemy: This shop is owned and run by **Hema**, a studious and knowledgeable alchemist who has worked for the royal court. Her prices are steep, but she can be called upon to develop a medicinal tincture, enchant weapons with magical properties, and convert items to gold. Her shop also sells minor potions and consumable items.

18. Palace of Bahadur: This old palace traces back to Bahadur Raja, an ancient king from a different dynasty to the current Kuru Dynasty. It was built in the Treta-Yuga when Hastinapur was a mere town notable for its elephants and fertile land. Now, this palace is a closed compound whose wealth has been mostly stripped and repurposed in the new royal palace

This compound contains the descendants of Bahadur Raja, a noble family who still retain a fraction of the power and distinction that their ancestors once had. The family is headed by **Kalpana Devi**, a woman who is defensive of her status and resentful of the condition of her palace. Some people claim to have seen Prince Dhal visiting this compound, stirring up rumors of secret plots and royal intrigue.

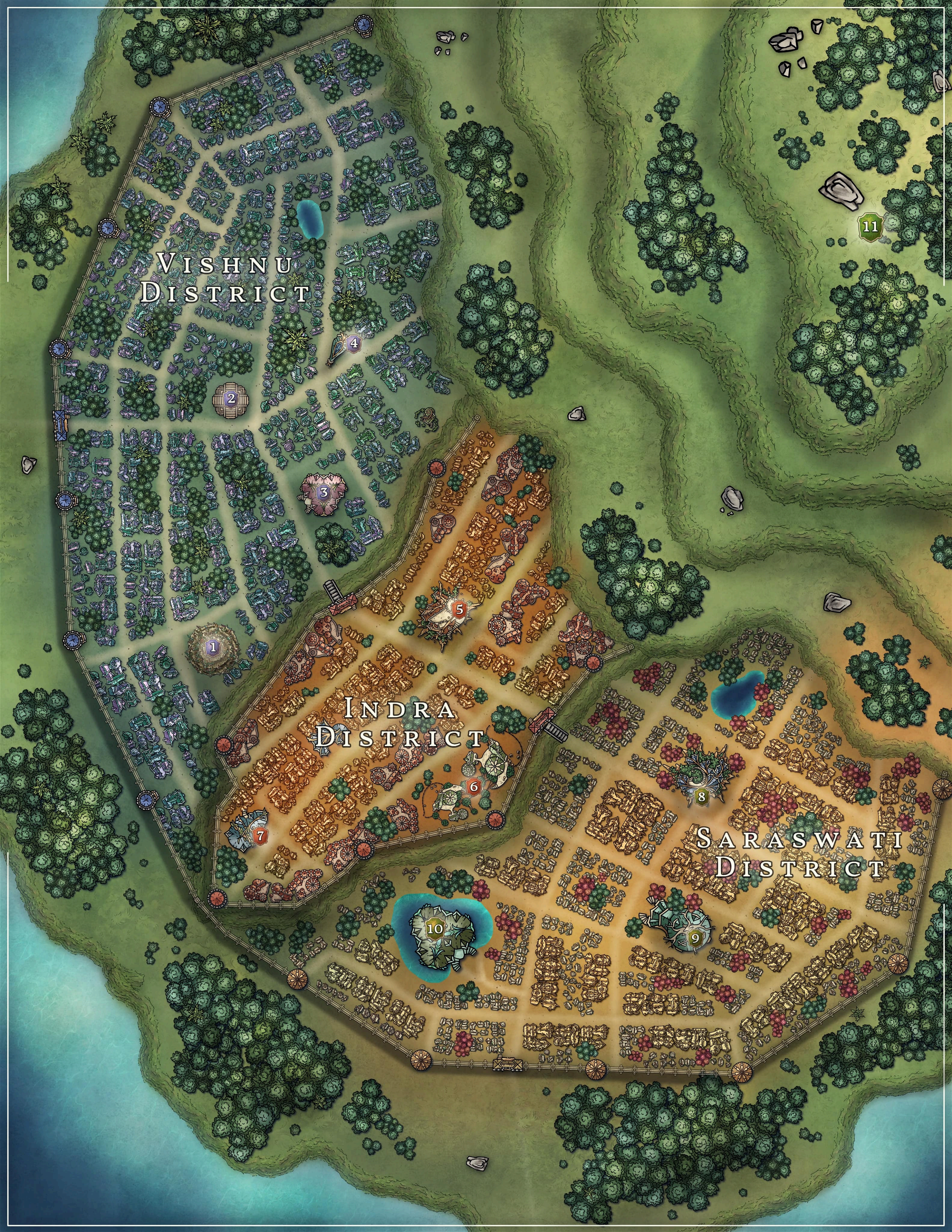
19. Mahasvara Temple: This magnificent temple is one of the largest in Devabhumi, drawing pilgrims from all four corners of the subcontinent. Delicately carved niches hold altars to 108 different gods, both major and minor. This temple has five total floors. The first floor is an open space with polished marble tiles for festivals, communal meals, and dances. The second, third, and fourth floors hold the 108 different gods. The fifth floor is designated for nobles and royalty and provides a beautiful perspective of all the previous floors.

Once a week, this temple hosts a free communal meal for all the city's inhabitants, along with visitors. A magical pot that is as big as an elephant and dates back to the Satya-Yuga is able to create an extended amount of food.

20. Royal Palace (North): This palace is the seat of power for one of the strongest dynasties in Devabhumi, the palace over which countless regicidal wars were waged. Now, it houses **Ashwa Raja**, his queen **Maduri Rani**, and their one daughter **Savita**. The palace contains the throne room of the Raja, where his family and numerous royal advisers convene, along with a number of luxurious rooms, gardens, and baths.

The palace is situated in the center of the city, along the banks of the Devapani River. Occasionally, the Raja and his family can be seen on the balcony listening to the praises and pleas of the people below him. If the Raja is particularly taken to a plea, he allows the person inside the palace to address his grievance. Ashwa Raja considers himself a just and noble ruler, but like every ruler, he has his weaknesses. Ashwa Raja is predisposed to extreme ambition and warlikeness, leading to a strained relationship with the nearby Matsya Kingdom.

During a diplomatic visit to the capital of the Matsya Kingdom, Ashwa Raja commented on the perceived weaknesses of the city and challenged Satamdhanu Raja that he could take his city in three days if he wished to do so. The boasting and chest-thumping of the past is very much alive in Ashwa Raja, which draws irritation from those around him.


Vishnu District
Indra District
Saraswati District
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DEVAKURMAPURAM, THE CITY OF THE GOD TURTLE

In collaboration with Stephen Sewell

Devakurmapuram (deh-vah-kur-mah-poo-ram) is carved into the side of the Magnah Parvatah, with walls protecting it from invasion on three sides. The architectural style of this city is unlike most other cities. It is the closest we have to a heavenly city in Devabhumi, with a likeness to Svargaloka. The city sits below the Amar Udyan, the divine garden at the center of the God Turtle. The apsaras that watch over this garden also serve as stewards over the city, teaching the humans knowledge reserved for the gods and guiding them during difficulties.

The masterful blend of human engineering and natural beauty is exemplified in this city, with trees and gardens growing alongside homes. Construction efforts in the City of the God Turtle are led primarily by Saraswati's Stonemasons, a guild of architects and craftsmen who manifest their geomantic and aquamantic magic through the bardic powers of song and dance. Aquamantic stonemasons craft the rock for their projects by chiseling it with blasts of water or tools shaped from the abundant rivers and streams of Magnah Pravatah.

Devakurmapuram can be divided into three sections that look from afar as a tricolor of brushstrokes painted onto the side of Magnah Pravatah. Facing the right side is the mango-colored district of Saraswati, the goddess whose apsaras song and dance defines the artistic side of Jalpurush culture.

VISHNU DISTRICT

On the left side of Magnah Pravatah is the District of Vishnu. Every blue imaginable colors the buildings of the Vishnu district, representing the infinity of his skies and oceans. Elevated above the other districts in the center is the District of Indra, covered in a crimson hue symbolizing the storm lord's power. This military district scans for threats and provides strength to protect the city. Together, these three districts compose the artistic marvel that is the city of Devakurmapuram.

1. Observatory: This large building resembles a hollowed-out tree, covered with grasping vines, hay, and moss. It is home to numerous songbirds, peacocks, butterflies, geckos, and other small beasts and wildlife of this island. Anyone can enter this observatory to enjoy an up-close encounter with the animals that live here. This observatory is under the watch of **Shantanu**, a Yaksha known for his calm and peaceful demeanor. Shantanu lives in the observatory, sleeping on the cool soil and lounging with the birds.

2. Deveta Vav: At the base of the Vishnu district lies a grand stepwell carved into the earth. To the Jalpurush, this stepwell is called Deveta Vav, "Stepwell of the Gods". Ten stories deep, the stepwell walls are covered entirely by sculptural panels which bring to life the literary epics of old. Each level of the stepwell has verandas supported by columns shaped into Vishnu's many avatars, and a pool of sacred water sparkles at the bottom. Located at the base of the mountain, the stepwell is easily accessible by all of Jalpurush. To the discerning eye, the stepwell lying at the bottom of the district mirrors how creation is built upon the back of Vishnu.

3. Sukh Sangrah: This hostel is the only one in the city, as there are few travelers who come here. The hostel is quite luxurious, with beds providing beautiful views of the mountain. The food is delicious and rich with spices, and the hot baths are clean and nourishing. Despite the luxuries, the hostel is actually a way for the city's guards to keep an eye on any travelers. Many of these guards pose as other travelers while they stay here, collecting information and ensuring the security of the city. If one arouses too much suspicion, they will be told to leave and escorted out of the city.

4. Mayura Archive: This small building is in the shape of a peacock's feather, with a narrow entrance through the apex. Inside the building is a shop arranged with shelves of scrolls carved on banana leaves, rare trinkets, and paintings of wild sceneries. **Hamsadevi** manages this shop, an older garuda who migrated to this city after being exiled from her original clan for her refusal to hunt animals. An ardent devotee of Vishnu, Hamsadevi found a welcoming community of other Vishnu devotees on this island.

INDRA DISTRICT:

Although still expressive, the buildings of Indra's district are understandably less artistic than the other two districts. Evoking the skin of the Storm Lord and symbolizing blood shed in battle, crimson paint covers the buildings in this district. Multiple fortifications and walls line the mountainside, as do many stables that house horses, the creatures that Jalpurush cavalry rides into battle. Atop these fortifications, several lightning towers crackle with stormy wrath, daring any asura or other nefarious monster to venture too close.

5. Barracks: This three-storied fortified building is home to the soldiers of Jalpurush, who are trained in both melee and ranged combat. The army of Jalpurush is small, but each soldier is zealously determined to fight to their deaths if their tiny island were to come under attack. A few spellcasters live among the soldiers, invoking the name of Indra and unleashing torrents of lightning bolts if needed.

The army is commanded by a half-asura named **Yashdeva**, who was surprisingly chosen by the council of Apsaras that rule over this city. Yashdeva wants to prove that his asura heritage does not define him, but rather his free will and devotion to this city. Yashdeva was brought here by his father, an asura who was part of an attacking army. His father and the remainder of the asura army was slain, but Yashdeva, who was still a child, was spared. He was raised by humans and grew up constantly seeking to prove himself, as he did not fit in with the other inhabitants.

Now he commands the entire army of Jalpurush, wrestling with his demonic nature and seeking to be worthy of his post every day. He desperately seeks to council with the apsaras, as they have soothed his worries before, but the apsaras rarely see him for more than a few minutes. This makes Yashdeva quite susceptible to the charismatic influence of **Gayatri**, something that the apsaras do not realize.

6. Farasa Bahari Stables: These double-sided stables are the training ground for the Farasa Bahari (see **Mounts**), the legendary aquatic horse that the Jalpurushan cavalry rides upon. These horses are amphibian, allowing them to breathe on both land and in water. If you walk past these stables, you may be able to hear the thunderous snorting of the Farasa Bahari, or even see a member of the cavalry seated atop one. Old or injured horses may be purchased here, at a discounted rate of 500 gp. The cavalry commander, a sharp woman named Tejasvi, seeks to capture more Farasa Bahari from the great churning. She is willing to pay adventurers a liberal amount of gold for these aquatic creatures.

7. Temple Fort of Indra: Near the top of Magnah Pravatah lies the Temple Fort of Indra, a place to worship the warring storm god and the best vantage point on the mountain to spot approaching danger or sailors in distress. Mahendra is the main priest of this temple, conducting regular pujas and sacrifices to the storm god. Mahendra is an older priest with a sharp white mustache and flowing white hair, with his skin decorated in numerous scars and tattoos. It is rumored that the priest possesses an Indrastra, a powerful divine weapon that can strike down dozens of men at once. Many have come to seek the knowledge of this divine weapon from the priest, only to meet his wrath and be annihilated by his fury. During a meeting with Mahendra, it is advised to never ask for this knowledge, as it will not bode well for that person.

SARASWATI DISTRICT

Buildings in the district of Saraswati are painted mango yellow, and its residents most fervently adhere to the cultural traditions of oration, music, and dance that characterizes Jalpurush society.

8. Gandhari's House: This is a large dwelling built in the canopy of a tree, requiring a ladder to enter. It is the home of **Gandhari**, a blind Yakshi who is an astrologer and somewhat of an oracle. Whenever a child is born, it is brought to Gandhari, who determines the name in order to ensure good luck. Throughout her long life, Gandhari has been able to predict dangers and calamities that may befall the city, such as invasions by asuras or secret plots by travelers. Some day that Gandhari is able to speak to the God Turtle, as her ability to predict the future is uncanny.

However, Gandhari has recently fallen ill and has not been able to serve the city for the last three months. Her age has advanced significantly, and some say that she is nearing the end of her lifespan. With no one to succeed her, an air of unease and fear has overtaken the people of Jalpurush.

9. Kathak Hall: This stone building opens up to a large and open hall with seats neatly arranged on one side. Performances of song, dance, and theater are performed here, which provides entertainment to the city's inhabitants. But most notably, this building is famous for its Kathak performances. Kathak is a story-telling dance form that combines all three pillars of the Jalpurushan arts–dance, music, and storytelling. These Kathak performances can last for hours, during which tales of gods, heroes, and mortals are told. During a Kathak night, this building can overflow with the entire city's inhabitants, with long lines and crowds forming outside.

10. Lotus Temple: Midway up the side of the mountain in this district lies the Lotus Temple, a temple of Saraswati surrounded by lotus ponds that blossom with enchanting pink flowers. From this location, the whole of the district is able to hear the Lotus Temple's music when it is time to exalt the Divine Patron of the Arts. The priestess of this temple **Gayatri** is a half-apsara who is a child of a union between one of the apsaras who preside over the city and a handsome human. Unfortunately for Gayatri, her apsara mother had to leave her in the city, as the council of apsaras would not accept a half-apsara living in their sacred gardens.

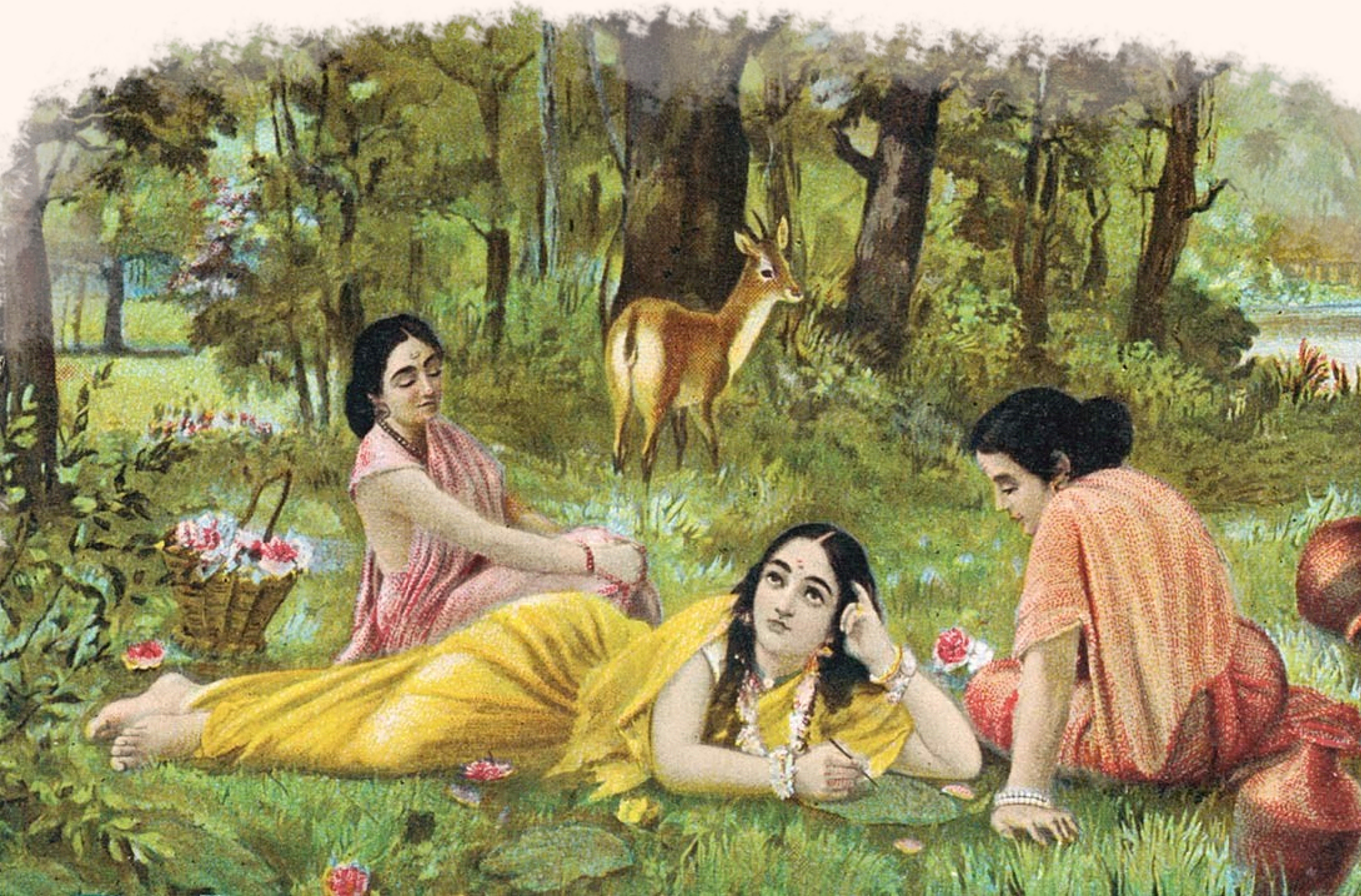
Gayatri wishes to prove herself worthy to take on her mother's mantle, and pursued her calling of becoming somewhat of a guide and leader to the people of this city, to the dislike of the apsaras. Unbeknownst to the apsaras, Gayatri secretly plots to enter the Amar Udyan and drink the Amrita to become immortal–the ultimate act of treason. She first seeks to convince the struggling Yashdeva to her cause, who can help her fight the dvarapala that guard the Amrita.

11. Amar Udyan: This heavenly garden grows on the very peak of Magnah Parvatah, tended to by three immortal apsaras–**Lakshadevi**, **Tulsidevi**, and **Kirandevi**. No mortal has seen the interior of this garden, which holds Amrita, the divine nectar of immortality. This garden is guarded by four Dvarapala. The three apsaras are the only creatures on this island allowed to nourish themselves from the Amrita, which allows them to remain immortal.

It is rumored that these apsaras have been alive since the Satya Yuga, dating back millions of years. The mortals that live in the city have no desire to taste the nectar of immortality for themselves, knowing that the integrity of this island relies on their self-denial. If even one mortal were to taste the Amrita, it would lead to a vast majority of people seeking to secure immortality for themselves. The island would get overcrowded and the Amrita would eventually run out.

One of the apsaras, Kirandevi, who is also the youngest of the three, fell in love with a human and bore a daughter named Gayatri. However Kirandevi was not allowed to enter the Amar Udyan with her daughter, who was a mortal. Kirandevi left her daughter behind in the city and bitterly spends her infinite days alone and watching her daughter grow old.

The thought of permanently leaving Amar Udyan has crossed Kirandevi's mind multiple times, to live with her daughter and letting the amrita's effects wear off. But her daughter Gayatri seeks to sneak into the Amar Udyan and drink the Amrita to secure immortality for herself. These actions, if succeeded, would destabilize the entire nation of Jalpurush.



Shakuntula Patra-Lekhana by Raja Ravi Varma. Public Domain.

Religion

Religion in Devabhumi has ancient roots. It can be compared to a tree trunk, where a series of concentric circular rings are built on top of each other. In a similar way, various religious beliefs and philosophies are also superimposed on each other. Two viewpoints that differ can both be considered valid. Religious beliefs are diverse and varied, but they have a common set of themes and concepts that unify all religions.

The first concept is Karma, which states that each action comes with a consequence, either positive or negative. Good actions bring positive results, while bad actions bring negative ones. Of course, this is a simplification (see section on Karma).

The second concept is Dharma, which refers to behaviors that are in harmony with nature and preserve life. Dharma also refers to personal and religious duties that govern an individual's life.

The third concept is Samsara, which is the constant cycle of birth and rebirth. Time in Devabhumi is cyclical, and things have a way of repeating themselves. Reincarnation is the natural order of all life forms.

All religious beliefs in Devabhumi are united by these three central concepts: karma, dharma, and samsara. Despite these themes, religions come in a myriad of belief systems, rituals, and customs. Some religions are individualistic and focus on the self, while others focus on group worship. Some religions have goals of acquiring material prosperity, others of spiritual contentment. You will find almost limitless variations of religions throughout Devabhumi.

Different villages and tribes will have different gods, some foreign and some well-known. The GM can create their own religion with the help of these questions.

- Does the religion involve worship of a particular god, gods, or rakshasha?
- Does the religion have any initiation rituals for interested followers?
- How old or new is the religion, and how was it founded?
- What is the aim of the followers of the religion?
- What does the religious hierarchy look like? Is it centralized or decentralized?

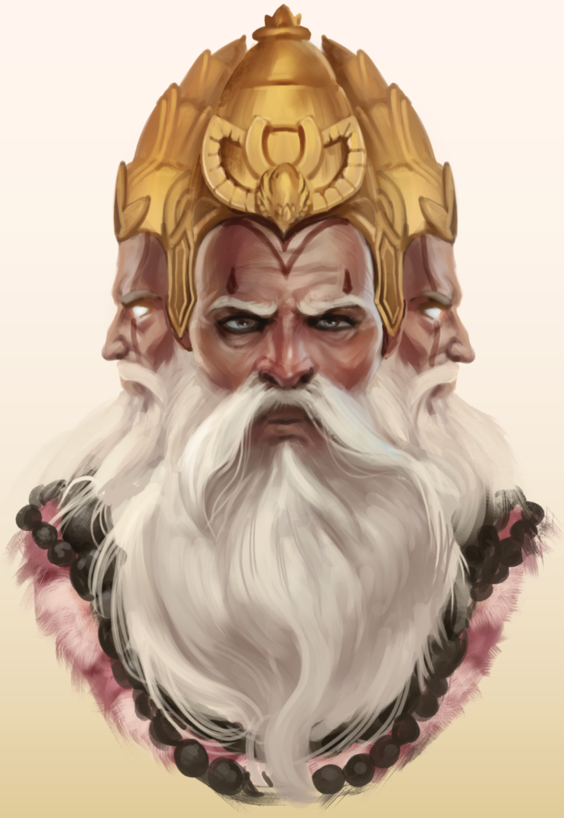
THE GODS

The gods of Devabhumi live in an elevated state of mind and matter but are not completely free from the emotions that torment mortals. They bless and curse mortals at a whim, award and remove their favor as they please, and sometimes interject themselves into events they find interesting. The law of the universe is dharma and karma, and even the gods are subject to this law.

The followers of a god may not have the same alignment as that particular god. A lawful evil follower of **Shiva** (chaotic good) may perform severe penances and sacrifices to please the god, who may still decide to generously reward his follower. The asura **Ravana** was a devout follower of Shiva, who rewarded him with powerful boons.

Male gods are usually paired with female goddesses. Both are prayed to and worshiped throughout Devabhumi. Sometimes, all-male cults or all-female cults are formed that worship a singular god or goddess through secretive rituals.

The cosmic functions of creation, preservation, and destruction are manifested in three main deities that are at the head of the Pantheon of Devabhumi, together known as the **Trimurti**. Each main deity has a female consort that together contributes the **Tridevi**.



Brahma by John Ric Detoon

BRAHMA, THE CREATOR (TRUE NEUTRAL):

Brahma is the god of creation, knowledge, and the overseer of religious texts. He is depicted with four heads and four arms that face each cardinal direction, while sitting on a giant lotus flower.

According to scriptures, the god Brahma created himself in a golden embryo. He was born in the void, a realm that is completely empty, a place that is neither light nor dark. Upon realizing this, Brahma created light and dark, land and water, and all the various gods and their domains. Then he created various living creatures to populate the world. Brahma then created his wife **Saraswati**, the goddess of knowledge. Together they both reside in the highest of heavens, guarding the delicate art of creation.

Brahma is an aloof god that often hides himself from mortals, only showing his form to the truly devoted. Brahma is not commonly worshiped in Devabhumi, although the reason is not exactly clear. Some say that he fell out of favor with the people; others say that he was cursed by Shiva. But regardless of this, Brahma presides over the world with a ready mind, ready to create new life whenever necessary.

The holy symbol of Brahma is Om, which is the first letter of the Indic alphabet. This is also believed to be the first word chanted by Brahma.

VISHNU, THE PRESERVER (LAWFUL GOOD):

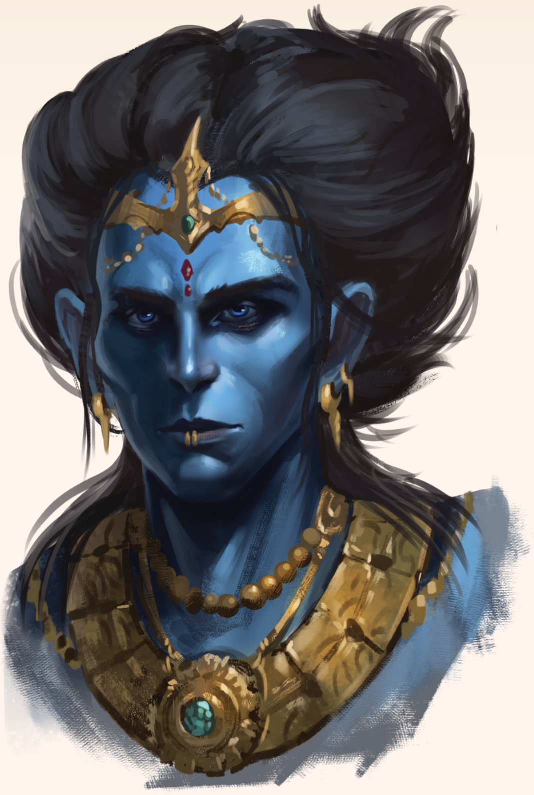
Resting on the coils of a massive ten-headed snake in the midst of an endless ocean of milk is the god Vishnu, the preserver of all things. He sits next to his consort, the goddess **Lakshmi**, enjoying her company until he is called by the universe to intervene.

Vishnu is the god of preservation, dharma, righteousness, and justice. He is the most "hands-on" of all the gods, often incarnating in the world as an avatar to offer his aid. This usually occurs when there is a cataclysmic crisis that is threatening the world, such as a rakshasha becoming too powerful.

Balance is an important quality of Vishnu, who creates both nurturing and destructive effects on the world. Vishnu may protect the lives of devotees in his mercy and at the same time rend the homes of evil-doers with tragedy.

Vishnu is a popular god in Devabhumi and is worshiped regularly. He is worshiped widely across social classes and backgrounds. He also has the most extensive collection of stories written by ancient sages chronicling his avatars, which are popular among the masses.

Large temples to Vishnu are common in most cities and are often more decorated and endowed than other temples. The holy symbol of Vishnu is the *chakra*, a round spinning disc that symbolizes the cycle of Samsara.



Vishnu by John Ric Detoon

SHIVA, THE DESTROYER (CHAOTIC GOOD)

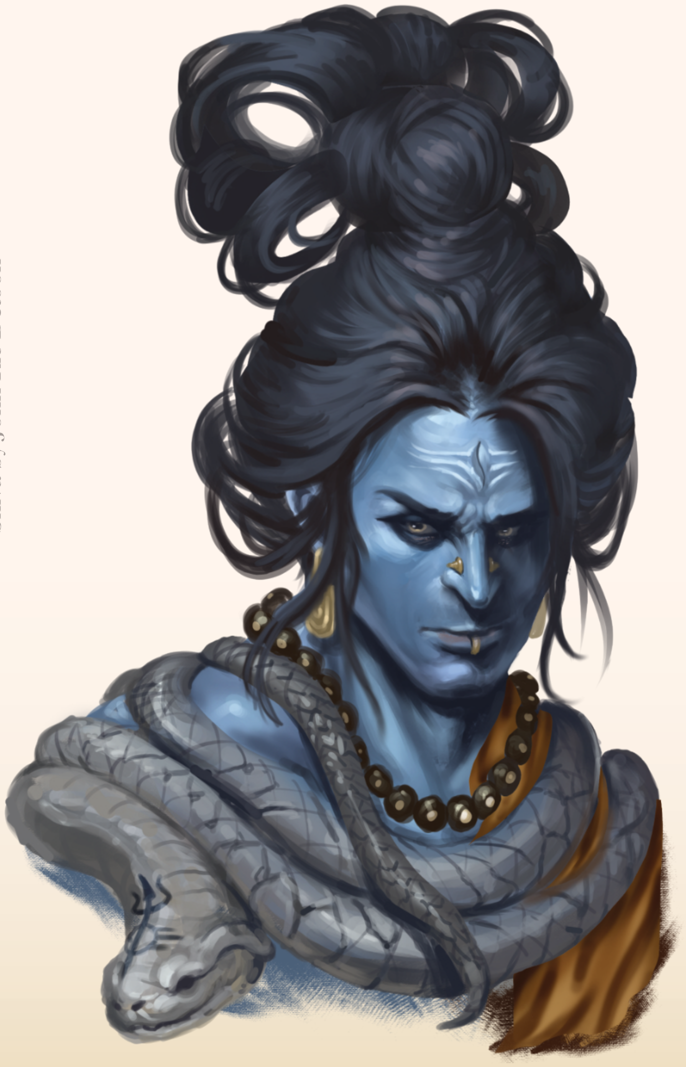
Meditating on top of an icy mountain while sitting on a jaguar pelt is the mercurial god Shiva, along with his consort **Parvati**. Shiva has long dreadlocks, from which a river flowers forth. His characteristic trident is on his side, within arms reach. The Destroyer of the Worlds is calm when he is meditating, and to disturb his trance would mean great calamity.

Shiva controls the final role in the cyclical process of all things—destruction. For the new to emerge, the old must be destroyed, and Shiva facilitates that destruction. According to scriptures, during the final days of the world, Shiva will open his third eye. Then he will stand up and perform a terrifying dance called the *Tandav*. Each footstep leads to an earthquake or some other natural calamity until the world is thoroughly destroyed.

Followers of Shiva aim to gain the favor of the god, hoping to be spared when the world is destroyed. They also maintain their beliefs that destruction and change are inherently beneficial elements. As a result, followers of Shiva are typically mercenaries, philosophers, wandering hermits, and others who prefer frequent change and the unknown.

Large human-made temples to Shiva are rare. Instead, temples to Shiva tend to be inside caves, on top of mountains, or small shrines in the wilderness. Followers of Shiva often make long and arduous pilgrimages to these remote spots to seek the god's blessing.

The holy symbol of Shiva is a trident, which is the god's weapon of choice and focus for spellcasting.



Shiva by John Ric Detoon

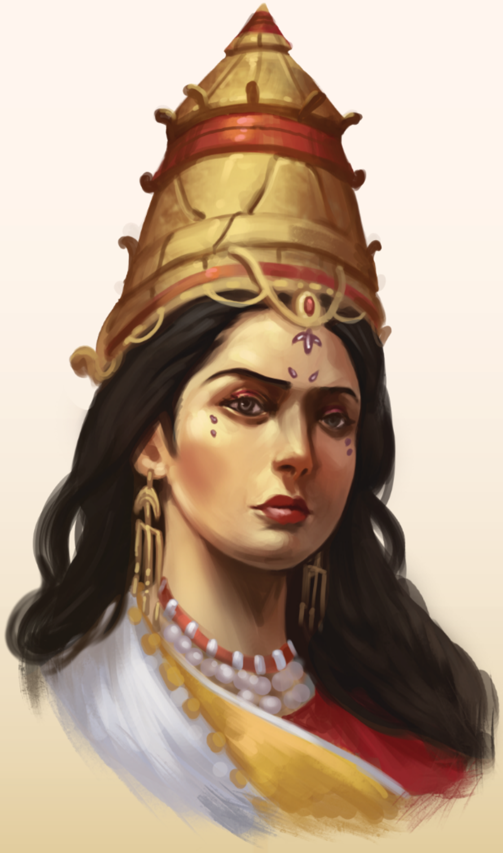
The Tridevi: This refers to three chief goddesses who are the consorts of the three chief gods constituting the Trimurti. Each goddess represents the feminine version of the qualities of their male counterparts. Therefore, it is believed that one cannot obtain the favor of a god without also obtaining the favor of the goddess that accompanies him.

Saraswati (Neutral Good)

While Brahma presides over creation and the abstract possibilities that come with that, his consort Saraswati presides over the practical aspects of creation—knowledge, learning, speech, and art. Saraswati is depicted wearing an all-white sari and with four arms each holding a different symbol (a book, prayer beads, a water pot, and a stringed instrument called the Veena).

Saraswati has many worshippers in Devabhumi but is particularly popular with children. When children reach the age where they are able to write, an elaborate ritual is performed where the hands of the child are decorated with Henna, any writing utensils and books blessed by a priest, and sacrifices are offered to the goddess. This ritual is performed to ensure the child grows up to be intelligent and literate.

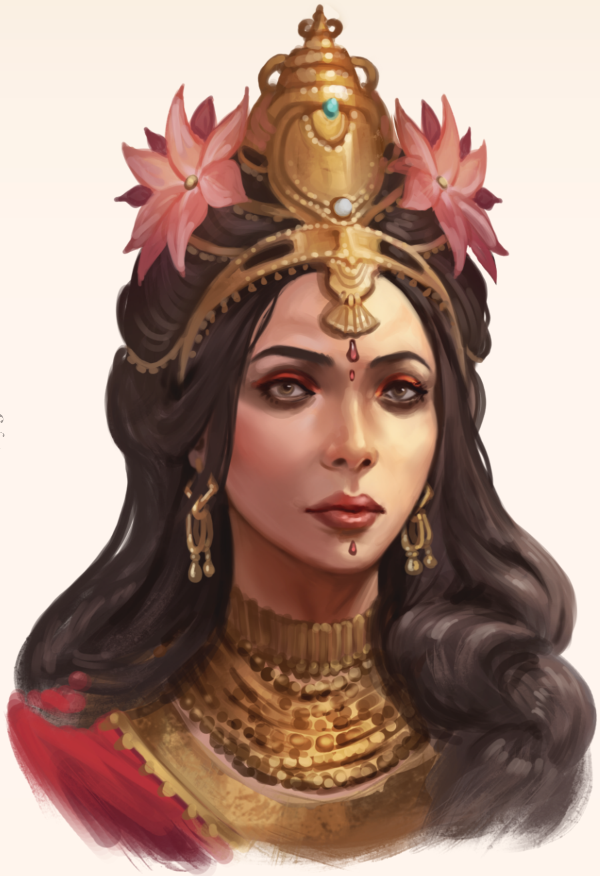
Furthermore, students in ashrams (specialized schools) pray to Saraswati and offer



Saraswati by John Ric Detoon

sacrifices to ensure they understand their lessons. Saraswati is also popular with artists, authors, and orators.

There are many temples to the goddess throughout the land, often built next to a river or stream where worshippers are able to wash themselves before entering the temple. The holy symbol of Saraswati is a Veena, a stringed musical instrument.



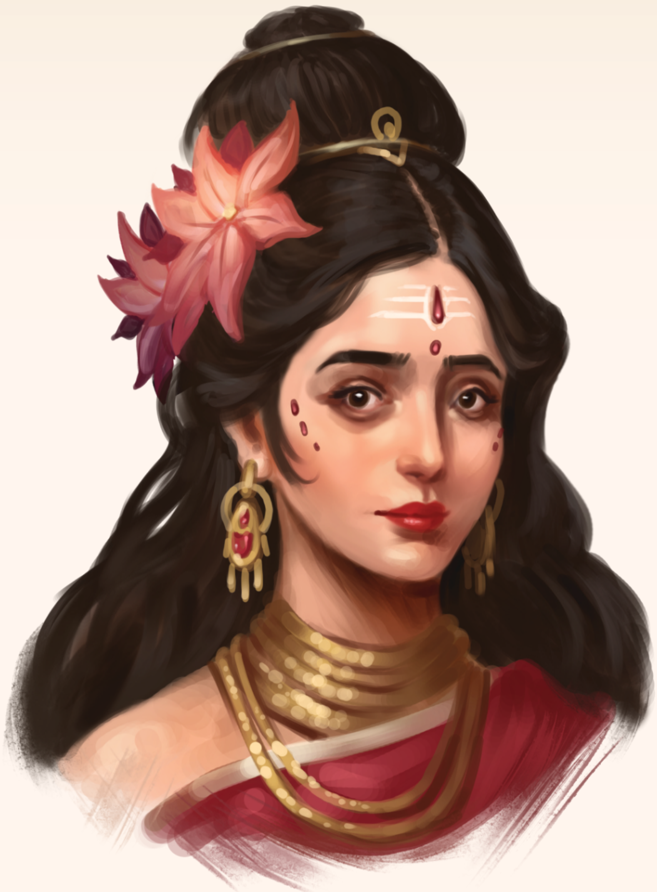
Lakshmi by John Ric Detoon

LAKSHMI (TRUE NEUTRAL)

Lakshmi is the goddess of fortune, wealth, prosperity, beauty, and fertility. She represents worldly gain and success. Lakshmi is the consort to Vishnu. The goddess is depicted in a colorful ornate sari, often red, and with four hands. Two of her hands hold lotus flowers, which represent prosperity. Two of her hands are empty, which represent the desire for more.

Many people keep statues and paintings of Lakshmi in their houses in an attempt to attract the goddess to "dwell" in their households. It is believed that a very wealthy or fortunate household has the goddess residing within the walls. Therefore, it is very important to not offend the goddess, lest she leave the household and cause misfortune to strike its inhabitants.

Lakshmi has only a few large temples built for her in Devabhumi. Instead, small shrines to her are built on roads where travelers can pray for a peaceful passage. Despite this, Lakshmi remains a popular goddess that is worshipped by most inhabitants of the land. The holy symbol of Lakshmi is a lotus flower, which represents growth and prosperity.



Parvati by John Ric Detoon

PARVATI (NEUTRAL GOOD)

Parvati is the goddess of motherhood and of both gentleness and strength. She represents the duality of motherhood—gentleness towards her children and strength towards those who seek to harm them. Like Shiva, she is fearsome if aroused to anger and assumes the form of Kali.

Parvati is the consort to Shiva and the mother of Ganesha. The goddess is depicted as sitting in a comfortable pose, wearing a soft dress, and holding her son Ganesha. But she is also depicted as sitting on a fearsome lion, which represents her dual nature.

Parvati is not often worshipped; instead, the people of Devabhumi tend to worship her destructive form, Kali. Those that do worship

Parvati tend to be new mothers and fathers, who pray for the protection of their child.

Parvati has few temples throughout the land. She is a highly personal goddess that is more symbolic and a role model for the masses. The holy symbol of Parvati is a calf, symbolizing the nurturing and regenerative energies of the goddess.

DEVAS & DEVIS:

The rest of the Indic Pantheon is composed of minor gods and goddesses that cover almost every domain in existence. There are over 10,000 unique gods and goddesses in this Pantheon. This section covers the most common ones.

AGNI (CHAOTIC)

Agni is the god of fire, energy, and food. Agni is the medium of the other gods, as they primarily speak through him. This is because a puja (worship ritual) for any god first requires fire. Therefore, Agni must be present before the worship can reach the other god. Agni is also the god of food because it is believed that digestion cannot take place without the fiery, metabolic energy that is present in the stomach.

Agni is depicted as bright red in color, with three heads and four arms, a large belly because he consumes everything offered to him in the flames, and riding on a ram.

Agni is not worshipped directly, but his name is invoked as part of any ritual. His statues are present on the corners of temples, representing his importance as a medium. He is individually invoked during sickness due to his role with food and digestion, but that is rare. The holy symbol of Agni is fire.

GANESHA (LAWFUL)

Ganesha is the elephant-headed god of good fortune, luck, and prosperity. He is the child of Shiva and Parvati and remains in his childlike and youthful form. He lives upon Mount Kailash with his parents, entertaining them with his play.

Ganesha is depicted with the head of an elephant and the body of a young boy. He's often shown with four arms and a round belly. Two of his hands hold sweets one holds an axe, which represents the divine nature of the god.

Ganesha was created from clay by **Parvati**, who wished to have a son. When she brought him to life, she instructed him to stand outside the bath house while she bathed, not allowing anyone to enter.

When **Shiva** attempted to enter the bath house to join his wife, Ganesha stood in front of the door. Not knowing who this little boy was, Shiva became annoyed and explained to Ganesha that he was the husband of Parvati and that he can enter the bath house if he so wills. Ganesha, following his mother's instruction, still refused to allow Shiva to enter. Shiva became enraged and cut off the head of the boy.

Upon hearing the commotion, Parvati rushed outside and found the body of her son lying on the ground. She was overwhelmed with grief and explained to Shiva that Ganesha was her son and that he was just following her instructions. Since Shiva used his trident to kill Ganesha, his head was irrecoverable. So Shiva took an elephant's head and joined it to the body, bringing it to life.

Ganesha is prayed to for good luck, fortune, and at the beginning of any endeavor. Temples to Ganesha are common throughout the land, which are known for their mountains of sweets offered to the god. The holy symbol of Ganesha is an elephant's head, representing life and good fortune.

HANUMAN (LAWFUL)

Hanuman is the Vaanar god of strength, loyalty, and wisdom. He is the famous companion to the god Rama, an avatar of Vishnu that incarnated during the Treta Yuga. Hanuman is also the son of the god of wind, Vayu, and a Vaanar mother and is therefore considered a god. He is depicted as strong and powerful while holding his gada, and he has an icon of **Rama** and **Sita** (incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi) in his heart.

Hanuman is often worshiped by devotees of Vishnu, as Hanuman is considered to be his biggest devotee who can intercede on their behalf. He is also worshiped by soldiers, laborers, and anyone who bears a burden, whether physical or mental, in their lives. Large temples to Hanuman are present in major cities. It is also common for a small statue of Hanuman to be present in temples of Rama and Vishnu.

Hanuman's holy symbol is a large bronze gada (mace), decorated with gems and gold. It represents strength and the ability to bear heavy burdens in the service of one's god.

INDRA (LAWFUL)

Indra is the god of lightning, thunder, storms, and rain. In the society of Devabhumi, thunderstorms and rain are viewed as the bringers of order, the restoration of nature. This is because storms are often preceded by long droughts and periods of dryness. Therefore, Indra is a lawful god, despite his domain being turbulent.

Indra is depicted holding a thunderbolt in his hand while riding an elephant or chariot. His clothes are noble and regal, and his skin is light and decorated with henna. Indra is worshiped mainly by farmers and laborers, who pray and sacrifice to him for ample rain.

Indra has small shrines and temples built for him in small villages throughout Devabhumi. During the planting period of agriculture, a large sacrifice called the *Indra Puja* is performed, where heaps of ghee (clarified butter), incense, and sweets are poured into a large fire in hopes that the fragrance reaches Indra. The holy symbol of Indra is a thunderbolt, which is commonly worn as a charm by many farmers.

KALI (CHAOTIC)

Kali is the goddess of slaughter, death, and sacrifice. She is the destructive avatar of the goddess **Parvati**. Like Shiva, once she is aroused to rage, she is almost impossible to console. Unlike Yamaraj, who is also the god of death, Kali presides over the act of dying itself rather than the concept of death. She represents the destructive and often unpredictable nature of dying.

Kali is depicted with midnight blue skin with 10 arms, all holding various weapons. Her eyes are red with rage, and her tongue protrudes from her mouth. She wears a garland of skulls around her neck and tiger skin around her waist.

The only person that is able to console the rage of Kali is her husband, Shiva. During a recent battle between the gods and rakshasas, Kali entered into a violent ire and was unable to distinguish between gods and rakshasas. She slayed all, indiscriminately. The gods, who were afraid, tried everything to console the goddess, but to no avail. Then Shiva laid himself on the ground in front of her. As she was about to step on her husband, she came to her senses and calmed her rage.

Kali is usually worshiped before a battle or before one commits an act of violence. She is also the patron deity of revenge, especially if it is committed someone who was wronged. Kali has few dedicated followers outside of secretive cults and barbarians relying on their rage. Instead, many of her worshippers tend to worship and sacrifice to her only if violence is needed in their lives.

Kali has a few large temples in cities, but many more smaller shrines spread throughout the wilderness. It is common for animals such as goats to be sacrificed to the goddess to appease her bloodthirst. As a result, the priests and worshippers of Kali tend to be at direct odds with the Ahimsayas and worshippers of Vishnu. The holy symbol of Kali is a skull, which is often carried by her followers. A priest of Kali wears a garland of skulls in imitation of the goddess.

KAMADEVA (CHAOTIC)

Kamadeva is the god of lust, desire, and beauty. He is the child of **Brahma**, created in order to ensure that his creation is able to propagate and spread. He is considered the god of erotic love rather than conjugal love. His nature is ever-fleeting and chaotic, just like the transitory nature of lust and desire.

Kamadeva is depicted as a handsome young man with blue-green skin, holding a bow made with sugarcane and arrows of flowers. He is shown riding a small chariot pulled by colorful parrots.

Kamadeva was created by Brahma and ordered to shoot his arrows of love at the rest of his creation so that they may reproduce. Kamadeva obliged and went to work, instilling desire and lust among the people. However, one day Kamadeva became bored and decided to shoot an arrow at Brahma. The Creator was overcome with feelings of lust towards his creation but soon regained his sober self. Upon realizing what happened, he cursed Kamadeva to be burned to ashes by the god Shiva in the future.

One day, after suffering defeat at the hands of a powerful rakshasa named **Tarakasura**, the gods debated different ways to defeat him. There was an ancient prophecy that claimed that only the son of Shiva can defeat Tarakasura. Shiva did not have any children at that time, so the gods devised a plot. Kamadeva would shoot an arrow at the meditating Shiva and compel him to create a son with his wife Parvati. After Kamadeva successfully hit Shiva with an arrow, the god awoke from his meditation, furious that he was disturbed, and burned Kamadeva to ash. Then he slept with Parvati, and together they created the god **Kartikeya**, the god of war. Kartikeya defeated the rakshasa Tarakasura, while Kamadeva was brought back to life at the request of Parvati.

Kamadeva does not have any temples or statues in Devabhumi, but he is worshiped by lovestruck individuals and young couples. He is also invoked during marriages to bless the couple with children. The holy symbol of Kamadeva is a flower arrow, representing the pleasure and pain that comes with lust.

Kartikeya (Lawful)

Kartikeya is the god of war, battle, and strategy. He is the child of Shiva and Parvati, created with the purpose to destroy the demon Tarakasura. Along with his military might, Kartikeya is also known for his tact and his wisdom. He does not favor any particular side during a battle but rather individually favors bold fighters and tactful generals.

Kartikeya is depicted as a strong young man with six heads and four arms, one of which is holding a spear called a Vel. He is shown sitting upon a peacock with two female consorts.

Kartikeya is famously worshiped by the warlike nations of the south and by other nations and tribes that are about to enter a pitched battle. Temples to Kartikeya are present throughout Devabhumi, particularly in the south. Soldiers, generals, and statesmen all call upon his name before carrying out their duties. The holy symbol of Kartikeya is a single-pronged Vel, which represents the concentration of force and boldness required to overcome struggle.

Surya (Lawful)

Surya is the god of the sun, light, radiance, and of new beginnings. He is the forerunner of light, pulling the sun with him in a chariot across the sky. He dispels both physical and intellectual darkness and aids in the pursuit of life and knowledge.

Surya is depicted riding a golden chariot pulled by seven horses, which represent the seven days of the week as well as the seven rays of visible light. He wears a golden crown with the sun sitting on top of it. His skin is tanned and bronze, and his hands are holding lotuses.

Surya is the father of **Karna**, one of the great heroes of the Mahabharata. Surya is worshipped by almost all the inhabitants of Devabhumi. It is customary to pour out an ablution of water to the sun god every morning as an offering to his radiance and light. Ardent devotees of Surya tend to be royalty such as Rajas, Ranis, and other nobles.

There are large Sun Temples dedicated to Surya in major agricultural cities, with priests offering regular sacrifices of crops and plants to please the god. Sun Temples are perhaps the most iconic temples in Devabhumi, with a distinct appearance of a tall chariot with fierce horses and colossal wheels. Their walls are decorated with intricate iconography and relief sculptures, and the interior is large and empty. Many of these Sun Temples are points of pilgrimage, and the people of Devabhumi will travel long distances to visit them. The holy symbol of Surya is the sun, representing the source of life and his power.

Varuna (Lawful)

Varuna is the god of the sea, lakes, rivers, and sky. Varuna presides over all that is binding, such as oaths and promises. He does not control the ocean, but rather calms and soothes it, which is a tumultuous, chaotic force by nature.

Varuna is depicted riding his mount, a Makara, which is a sea creature resembling a large fish with an elephant-like trunk. He has four arms, two of which hold a lasso, which represent his binding nature.

Varuna is worshipped by a variety of people, including scribes, physicians, and sailors. His name is invoked when trying to calm a chaotic event, such as travel or pestilence. When people make oaths, they often swear by Varuna. There are few temples to Varuna in Devabhumi, usually built in coastal settlements that rely on the sea for sustenance. The holy symbol of Varuna is a lasso, which represents his binding nature.

Vayu (Chaotic)

Vayu is the god of the wind, messages, and breath. He is the messenger of **Indra** and father of **Hanuman**. Without Vayu, all living creatures that breathe would cease to exist, and the world would plunge into chaos.

Vayu is depicted riding in a beautiful chariot, decorated with gold and jewels, being pulled by gazelles. Alternatively, he is also depicted as riding a gazelle.

According to scriptures, Vayu's son Hanuman once arose in a deep hunger and attempted to swallow the sun. In order to stop the powerful Vaanar, the god Indra hit him with a thunderbolt, which made Hanuman fall to the ground, lifeless. Seeing the sight of his dead son, the god Vayu retreated into a cave, taking the world's air with him. As living creatures began to die, the gods became alarmed, and **Shiva** resurrected

Hanuman. Vayu was consoled, and he returned the breath of life to the world.

Vayu is not regularly worshipped, as there are no major temples built to him in Devabhumi. However, his name is invoked during Pujas and certain healing rituals. The holy symbol of Vayu is a blue swallow-tailed flag, representing the constant flow and movement of wind, messages, and one's own breath.

Yamaraj (Lawful)

The god of death, wisdom, and ancestors sits on his throne, not as a judge but as an altruistic king equally distributing death to all living beings. Yamaraj is not a punisher of sins nor an arbitrator of deeds, but a preserver of most the important stage in each creature's life—death. He ensures that each creature dies and that no one is able to cheat death.

Yamaraj is depicted with dark blue skin, with four arms holding a mace, a noose, and a shortsword. In some depictions, he is sitting on his throne; in others, he is riding a dark horse or bull.

Yamaraj was one of the first mortals to exist. His life was one of great pleasure and peace, as he lived in the Satya-Yuga. He was promised immortality by the gods, as death did not exist yet. However, before his pleasures turned into boredom and resentment and the gift of life became a curse, he chose to renounce immortality. He chose to die and journey to the afterlife. Therefore, he became the god of death and ruled over other souls who died.

There is just one temple to Yamaraj, which is rumored to be hidden in a place where the living world connects to the underworld. Those that find this temple are devotees seeking to renounce their bodies, just like Yamaraj did, and move onto their next stage.

The holy symbol of Yamaraj is a noose, which represents the ever-tightening grip of death and the inevitability of escaping it.

Local Devas & Devis

The gods and goddesses are general deities worshipped across Devabhumi. Certain regions may have additional gods that are localized to their culture and society. The domains of these local gods may overlap with those of the gods listed above, or they may be different domains entirely.

A large community that dwells upon high peaks may worship a stoic god that represents the quiet strength and protection of the mountains. Perhaps a jungle tribe worships an elusive goddess that oversees the realms of insects, controlling pestilence and preventing swarms. In a land with tens of thousands of gods, feel free to create deities and domains as you see fit.

Gods that walk the Land

Less than a thousand years ago, the beloved god **Vishnu** became human and assumed the form of Krishna, and lived in a royal palace surrounded by thousands of people. Many of the inhabitants of Devabhumi were able to see the god in person, to talk with, to feel, and to listen to the god. Not everyone is presented with such an opportunity, as currently in 1,044 N.S., any gods that remain on the land are hidden away from the eyes of most people.

For example, The god Shiva resides atop Mount Kailash, a sky scraping peak hidden within the Aakashparvat Mountains. Any mortals that are able to bear the arduous journey have the chance of earning his favor and being granted a boon from the god.

Boons

A boon is a powerful wish that is granted by a god, usually to a mortal who has greatly pleased the god. For example, Parvati was once a human who performed severe devotions to Shiva and journeyed to his abode. Pleased with her, he gave her a boon, and she requested to be his wife.

In order to coexist with the laws of the universe, a boon must follow two rules: a boon cannot directly destroy the world, and a boon cannot grant absolute immortality. One can wish to be the king of the known world, rich beyond belief, or to even be a god (one that can still be slayed).

A boon is a world-changing power that can inevitably alter the fate of the world, for better or for worse. Consider reserving boons for high-level characters or world altering campaigns.

Cults & Factions

Unlike cults in classic fantasy, the term “cult” doesn’t always carry a negative connotation in Devabhumi. A cult can simply be a group of people that worship a common god and have developed extensive rituals as part of their worship. Most cults in Devabhumi are tolerated, and some are even respected. Certain cults are so respected that it is tradition to seek out cult members for blessings after an important event such as a birth or marriage. There are also certain cults that are feared and disliked, depending on the ideology of the cult and the actions of the cult’s members.

Below are some of the common cults and factions in Devabhumi:

AHIMSAYAS

The Ahimsayas have one key and central tenet—Ahimsa (non-violence). They believe that non-violence is the highest dharma, the highest duty of mortals. Followers of the god Vishnu, they preach a strict and chaste life that causes the least amount of damage to living beings.

The Ahimsayas eat a vegetarian diet with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and dairy. They do not believe in war and fill the role of artisans and merchants in society. This group is widely spread throughout Devabhumi and generally accepted by society. This group is so widespread that certain inns and *dhabas* (dining places) cater to Ahimsayas, serving only vegetarian food on their menus.

The Ahimsayas frequently visit temples to Vishnu, whose priests are also Ahimsaya. They pool their money together to build grand temples that are open to the public. The Ahimsayas have also established themselves in government and politics due to their vested interest in their tenets.

AGHORIS

Followers of the god Shiva, these worshipers consider the entire world to be an illusion where things that appear base and rotten are actually beneficial for the soul, while things that appear clean and polished are secretly harmful.

As a result, some Aghoris practice a lifestyle where they consume rotten food, bathe themselves in ash, and smoke hallucinogenic plants. They are seen in public places such as markets and temples, preaching that the world is an illusion.

The Aghoris do not have a centralized religious system, and there are no superiors to bow down to. Each Aghori is on an individual path of self-transformation and worship. As a result, a follower has the freedom to live strictly as they like. Some followers become hermits, eating only rotten or cold food. Others keep their worldly duties and role in society but avoid luxuries and pleasure.

HIJRA

The Hijra are neither male nor female, encompassing qualities of both genders. The Hijra are considered blessed by the gods and generally respected in society. When a baby is born in a family or a couple is married, it is customary to have a Hijra present to witness and bless the occasion.

The Hijra do not have an organized hierarchy but rather live in local commonhouses with other Hijra, led by a guru. It is recommended to be on friendly terms with the Hijra, as their living spaces are considered holy and inviolable. Therefore, those seeking refuge from an enemy or the law can take shelter in a commonhouse.

The Hijra usually worship goddesses such as Parvati, Lakshmi, and Saraswati. But they can also worship masculine gods, depending on how they identify.

Zhav Nomad by Dibyo Shree

KAMUARAM

In collaboration with Stephen Sewell

The Kamuaram, or Cult of Kartikeya, is a philosophical and warrior-minded religion, primarily worshiped by the humans living in the southern reaches of Devabhumi. In the ancient days of the first age, Kartikeya, the god of war, victory, and knowledge, slew the asura king Takarasura, freeing heaven and earth from the clutches of demonic tyranny. Since then, Kartikeya has stood as a beacon of hope, strength, and wisdom for his worshipers, who strive to live their virtuous lives as warrior philosophers.

Worship of Kartikeya was spread in its earliest days by the mortal Agastya the Sage. Agasyta learned from Kartikeya how to speak in the dialect of **Por Moli**, “the language of war,” how to heal the sick with scientific medicine, and how to protect oneself through the martial art of **Silambam**. Por Moli has since become the primary language spoken by clergy and worshipers of Kartikeya, as it allows for greater articulation about warfare and martial arts than any other language in Devabhumi. These three pillars of language, healing, and warfare became cultural cornerstones of those who walked the path of the Six-faced God.

All members of society follow the Cult of Kartikeya, from boys and girls to old men and women, practicing the art of Silambam for self-defense and an outlet for worship. Agastya the Sage first learned the art of Silambam from Kartikeya himself and spread the knowledge of it to his faithful. Silambam originally referred to the bamboo sticks used by people living in the countryside to defend themselves.

Agastya expanded upon this early idea of Silambam, taking its core principle of self-defense, expanding its techniques, and guiding it with a disciplined regimen. The great sage emphasized an intense, full-body conditioning program featuring dance-like footwork and spiritual meditation. To this day, the original precepts laid out by Agastya continue to be refined by practitioners in training grounds all over cult lands, embodying the humility and wisdom that Kartikeya values.

MAHA YAKSHA

The cult of the Maha Yaksha is mysterious and rather unknown. Only whispers and rumors reach the ears of everyday people. This cult worships Yakshis (*masculine: Yaksha*), the ancient nature spirits that make their homes in the forest. They have a series of elaborate rituals that they perform in the wilderness, seeking to attract a Yakshi to them. As part of the ritual, the cult members may offer fruits, pleasant-smelling flowers, or even themselves.

Once a Yakshi is attracted to the ritual, it is believed that it will grant them any desire of their choosing. Usually, these wishes are related to love and desire. Worshipers may ask for romantic success, a prosperous family, or even the hand of the Yakshi in marriage. More often than not, this last wish is denied. But when it is granted, the mortal is whisked away to live with the Yakshi among the trees, never to be seen again.

TIRTH TARAKA

Tirth Taraka are guardians of pilgrims, holy places, and shrines to various gods. They are a loosely-formed order of warriors and paladins that travel long distances to protect pilgrims from rakshasas, bandits, and other nefarious forces that may waylay a pilgrim. Unlike other cults, the Tirth Taraka do not worship a singular god, but each individual may worship his or her own god. What unites the Tirth Taraka is a shared sense of belief in religious freedom and a duty to protect believers of different gods.

Despite their noble cause, there are very few Tirth Taraka left in Devabhumi. The order was once large and influential, with a provision of warriors guarding every major pilgrimage route. However, after the Mahabharata killed off most warriors and the ever-growing influence of Rakshashas and Asuras, the number of Tirth Taraka left is no more than a few hundred.

Their main headquarters is in the Panchavati Forest, next to a crossroads of multiple pilgrimage routes. They are led by the determined **Tarak Abishek**, an aging warrior whose resolve has only grown with time. Day and night, he works tirelessly to assign his dwindling warriors to various pilgrimage routes and sites.

THUGEES

Thugees are loosely organized gangs of bandits that wander the wilderness of Devabhumi, preying upon travelers, merchants, and pilgrims. There is a religious element to this cult, as some members are worshippers of Kali, the goddess of slaughter, but the motivations are still mostly self-centered.

Thugees recruit from captured prisoners, exiled criminals, and sometimes even political radicals. The ideology of individual members remains varied, despite a common goal of looting travelers. A thugee recruit must perform a series of tests, which include executing prisoners, firing the first arrow before an ambush, or hurdling through a gauntlet of clubs. If the recruit shows even an inkling of hesitation, they are turned away.

The Thugee Cult is active in much of Devabhumi, with camps in the jungles of the south, the deserts of the west, and the hills of the heartland. They generally do not wander east, as the wilderness becomes much more dangerous and isolated from the rest of the land.

YAMADUTAS

The word Yamaduta means “servant of Yama,” the God of Death. However, this cult does not actually serve Yama but rather uses his name as an excuse to carry out contract murders and killings. The Yamadutas are a secretive organization of assassins and killers-for-hire with a foothold in each major city. With enough monetary incentive, the Yamadutas will kill anyone unlucky enough to enter their sights.

Yamadutas recruit from the lowest rung of society, from orphans, street urchins, and those who have no family. They offer these people a way out of their current living conditions, a new purpose, and a close-knit community. As a result, many of the newer recruits embrace their new identity and protect the cult with fierce loyalty.

The leader of the Yamadutas is shrouded in mystery. Some say he is a Rakshasha in disguise; some say he is the god Yama himself. Regardless, whenever orders come from high up, they must be followed. To fail means to die.

YOGIS

The Yogis are a cult dedicated to the art of physical movement and medication known as yoga. They practice rigorous exercises and hold demanding poses for hours at a time, while at the same time training their mind to focus.

Some are drawn to yoga to strengthen the body, others to connect to the divine. This cult is not held together by similarity of belief but rather the interest in a shared activity.

The majority of Yogis are seen in scattered schools in the wilderness, known as Ashrams. But occasionally, an experienced Yogi may make their way into the city to teach the art of yoga to the nobility and wealthy individuals.

Yamaduta by Allan Damaso

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Karma

What goes around comes around. Karma is one of the two basic laws that govern the known universe, the other law being dharma. Like gravity is an unseen force that binds planets together, the thread of karma infiltrates all living creatures, tying together the very fabric of nature.

Karma influences the future of a living creature depending on their actions. Good action and good intent contribute to positive karma, which causes positive effects in that creature's life. Bad action and bad intent lead to negative karma, which causes negative effects.

Karma goes beyond a creature's life. It also affects the next life(s) of that creature, depending on how much positive or negative karma they have accumulated. A creature with lots of positive karma may be reborn in a life with prestige, comfort, and wealth. A creature burdened with negative karma may be reborn in a life of pain and hardship, such as a beast of burden. As a result, the people of Devabhumi tend to blame the karma of their past lives for any unfortunate life situations.

Karma Points

Every creature on Devabhumi has a certain amount of accrued karma. The Karma Points represent in a numerical value the amount of karma they have accumulated.

Karma points can be positive or negative, both which bring various effects on the PC. The points can max out at 15 or -15. Maxing out karma points is a legendary feat that is almost impossible to achieve, except for exceptional sages and nefarious villains.

Negative Karma

-15: This is the lowest level of karma one can accumulate. Even the greatest of rakshashas are not on this level of karma. To reach this level of karma, one must permanently alter the world and leave it in shambles. The action must be impactful and affect millions of people in the land.

Maintaining this level of karma requires one to be an agent of death and destruction. It requires one to dedicate their entire life to nothing but violence, chaos, and carnage.

Karma is at its most merciful at this level, attempting to restore balance from the tiniest of good actions. Karma can be gained by any display of self-restraint, allowing an enemy an easy death, or showing respect to the dead.

-14 to -10: To accrue negative karma on this level, one must shed the blood of innocents, attack and kill entire towns, spread evil and corruption among the masses, and betray one's own family or trusted friends.

Karma is extremely lenient on this level, providing ample opportunities for change and redemption. To reach this level of negative karma, one must be ruthless and vicious in their life, eliminating all of their enemies. To gain positive karma, one can just say a prayer to a good-aligned god, show mercy upon an enemy, or tend to an animal or plant.

-9 to -4: To accumulate more negative karma, one must physically injure an innocent creature, exploit others for personal gain, or attempt to corrupt someone. Karma becomes more lenient on this level, making it hard to accrue more negative karma but easier to gain positive karma.

To gain positive karma, one can simply perform one's lawful duty, offer a sacrifice to a good-aligned god, or seek counsel from a good-aligned priest.

-3 to 3: Karma is not amplified between these numbers. Gaining karma can be achieved by typical good deeds, such as offering to house a traveler for the night or tossing a few coins to a beggar. Losing karma can be accomplished by completing deeds such as verbally attacking another, insulting a god, or petty theft.

Positive Karma

4-9: Karma becomes more fickle in between these numbers. It is harder to gain karma and easier to lose it. To gain karma at this level, one must increase their efforts. Gaining karma can be accomplished by deeds such as providing one of your belongings to another, performing a service free of charge, or offering a beggar a sizable portion of coin.

Losing karma is easier on this level. One can lose karma by refusing to help someone in need or being deceitful.

10-14: This level of karma is the highest that most pious people will achieve in their lives. Due to the strict nature of karma at this level, it is extremely easy to lose points from the smallest of things. It is equally difficult to gain karma at this level, requiring great mental and bodily exertions.

To gain karma, one must perform deeds such as completing a difficult religious pilgrimage, putting one's own life in danger to save another, and sparing one's mortal enemies. To lose karma, one doesn't need to do much. Losing karma can be accomplished by actions as simple as telling a small lie or displaying anger.

15: This level of karma is supreme, and not even many gods are at this level. Those that manage to achieve this level of karma are usually isolated from society and spend their entire lives in meditation. Maintaining this level of karma requires a lifetime of dedication.

To reach this level of karma, one must perform an action that unquestionably changes the state of the world for the better, one that benefits millions of lives. It requires heroic efforts. Losing karma at this level is incredibly easy; however, those that have the discipline to reach this level of karma find it hard to lose it. Losing karma can be achieved by not showing courtesy to an elder or forgetting an obligation.

Rewards & Consequences

In the law of karma, good deeds are naturally rewarded. A person with high karma will feel popular, prosperous, and lucky. Karmic rewards tend to be natural processes, not divine gifts.

As a GM, you primarily control the effects that high or low karma will have on the PC. Someone with high karma will naturally find themselves being honored and respected by other people. They may find more treasure and key information. Someone with negative karma may find people who are rude or avoidant with them. They may be more likely to be targeted in combat. To make karma seem like a living, breathing law, make the rewards and consequences seem as natural as possible, something that the PCs can't quite put their hands on. The table below represents examples of rewards or consequences for each of the karma levels.

-15: The PC will face misfortune and evil at every turn. Wandering asuras seem to follow the character everywhere; bandits lurk around each corner, and the character attracts the attention of the nefarious and scheming.

-14 to -10: The PC will think that they are cursed with bad luck. The character will be frequently targeted in combat, may stumble upon cursed items, and be plagued by a disease.

-9 to -4: Spells of occasional bad luck will afflict the PC. The character may be frequently interrogated by guards, people around them will be mistrustful and suspicious, and they may find themselves targeted by pickpockets and swindlers.

-3 to 3: The character is affected by Karma in subtle ways. Perhaps they find a gold coin in the street, or mud is splattered on their clothes by a horse.

4 to 9: The character may find good things happening to them more frequently than others. People around them will be friendlier; they may escape the attention of thieves and swindlers, and they may be offered bonuses for their work.

10 to 14: The character will have good things happening to them on a daily basis. An enemy may avoid them in combat; they may come across treasure when exploring the land, and people will be drawn towards them.

15: The character will consider themselves extremely fortunate. Crowds will flock around the character in every city, wild animals will become gentle in the presence of the character, and even gods may directly approach the character for a divinely ordained quest.

An optional rule is to hide the karma points for each PC. Only the GM knows how many karma points each PC has accumulated. Consider enabling this rule for karma to seem more mysterious and enticing.

Character Creation

A mysterious rider strolls through town on a chariot drawn by four white horses. Strange armor covers his chest, and a fearsome helmet sits upon his head. The horses do not seem like the usual horses of Devabhumi—they are of a foreign build. The arrival of this stranger is a bad omen to the people of this town.

A strange monkey-like creature whose body is adorned with piercings and tattoos is seen in a small village. Everywhere the creature goes, it is followed by a crowd of people, amazed that they are seeing a Vaanar for the first time.

An elderly sage wanders through a remote cave system in search of an ancient tome requested by the king. It is rumored that this tome holds the date and time of any living person's death.

The world of Devabhumi is a world of diversity, mystery, and plenty of adventure. In this world, you are free to carve your destiny however you see fit. This chapter walks you through creating a character in the world of Devabhumi.

Race: There are 8 playable races in Devabhumi. Humans, Half-Apsaras, and Half-Asuras are the most common races, whereas the others are rarely spotted by people in this realm.

Background: Your background has a large influence on your character, helping to determine your mannerisms, worldview, and community. This setting is compatible with most backgrounds from the Core Rulebook, which can be reflavored to fit this world. Additional backgrounds are listed in a further section, which are unique to this world.

Class: This setting is compatible with all classes in the Core Rulebook. Feel free to flavor classes as you see fit for more immersion into this world.

Human Warrior by Dibyo Shree

Ancestries of Devabhumi

Devabhumi is full of humanoids that differ widely from each other. However, each race has a place in the world of Devabhumi, which wouldn't be the same without it. A brief overview of all the playable races in Devabhumi is listed below, followed by a more elaborate section about each individual race.

Human: The most populous of races in the land, humans make up the majority in most cities, towns, and villages.

Half-Apsara: This celestial race resembles humans but are imbued with a dash of the divine. They are tall, charismatic, and elegant.

Half-Asura: This race resembles humans but are imbued with the vice and corruption of the underworld. They are often tall, imposing, and have fangs protruding from their mouths.

Garuda: A fierce falcon-headed race that dwells atop high peaks and rarely mingles with humans.

Vaanar: A race of civilized monkey-kin that dwells in jungles and mountains and form complex societies.

Naga: This unique race consists of shapeshifting cobras. They have a special home in the underworld called Nagaloka, but they also inhabit poisonous jungles above ground.

Yakshi: A curious nature-dwelling race that is rarely spotted in Devabhumi. Their origins are just as obscure as their societies.

Jambavan: A solitary bear-like race known for their prowess in hunting as well as building. These territorial humanoids are tucked in the forests and mountains of Devabhumi.

HUMANS

The humans of Devabhumi can trace their roots back to the first human, **Manu**, who was created by Brahma in the Satya Yuga. As a result, many humans call themselves Manushya, or the descendants of Manu. The first human community incorporated peace and collaboration into their society where humans were all equal to each other.

However, this changed when **Kausilya**, an ambitious young man, thought that he should rule over the rest and declared himself king. At that instant, the community split and division rose among humans. Since their creation, the humans of Devabhumi are known for their divisive and quarreling nature.

Humans are by far the most numerous and abundant race in Devabhumi. They inhabit almost every environment, from sprawling cities to isolated mountaintops. There are very few places that can stop the ambition of humankind from settling upon it.

Humans have a tendency to form cliques with groups of people they share a similarity with. Those inside the cliques are treated like family, while those outside of it are treated coldly and with an air of mistrust. Cliques are an informal gathering of friends and relatives, as opposed to an official guild or organization. For an adventuring human, their party is their clique, and they seldom try to join other groups outside of it. The table below can help to provide inspiration for your clique.

Male Human Names: Aakash, Bharat, Chitrasen, Darsh, Gaurang, Iravan, Jatin, Kush, Nakul, Paavan, Shantanu, Vaman, Yaj, Yash.

Female Human Names: Anvi, Bhakti, Devika, Gayatri, Isha, Jahnavi, Kashi, Pooja, Radha, Savita, Shanti, Suvarna, Vandana, Vedika.

1. Your clique is a large extended family of two dozen relatives. Your clique treats you well but is adamant about you getting married.
2. Your clique is a group of worshipers in a temple that you frequent regularly. You worship the same god as these people and share meals with them.
3. You have a small ragtag clique composed of rejected and shunned members of society. This clique is your only family, and its members are extremely loyal to you.
4. You are part of a large social clique with hundreds of people. However, the clique is rife with backbiting and drama. You're not sure who to trust.
5. Your clique is composed of just one other person—your childhood best friend. You and your friend are as thick as blood.
6. You have no clique. Perhaps you were raised by a different race, or you abandoned the chattering of humans in search of something else.

HALF-APSARA

People seem to gather around you wherever you go, drawn to your inherent charm. Your words seem to flow like musical notes to the ears of your listeners, leaving them desiring more. Despite the praise and attention you garner for your grace and beauty, you know that it won't last for long.

Heavenly consorts to the gods, Apsaras were created for one purpose: to entertain the gods. After their creation, many Apsaras fell in love with their forms and wished to leave the heavens to live with each other. As a punishment, the gods sent them naked and hungry into the mortal world and cursed them with a short lifespan, shorter than the humans. The Apsaras would watch as their beautiful bodies became crooked and ugly with age and eventually succumbed to death. However, one good thing came out of this. They gained the ability to reproduce with humans and leave their mark of beauty as an imprint upon the population.

None of the original exiled Apsaras remain, but their blood flows in the veins of many humans to this day. A human marked by an Apsara may show signs such as great beauty, a gentle frame, and a graceful demeanor. However, they also bear a fragment of the Apsara's curse and have a shorter-than-normal lifespan.

Due to this unnerving loss of life, many Half-Apsaras are known to be unparalleled creators, artists, and scholars. They work tirelessly in their craft, seeming to make the most of the life they've been given. Some Half-Apsaras dedicate their lives to pleasure and hedonism, seeking to enjoy all the pleasures of life before their deaths. Perhaps you are an optimist who lives in the present moment and seeks to leave your mark upon the world. Or perhaps you see the futility of your efforts, instead preferring to retire to a quiet life of comfort until Yamaraj calls your name.

Names: As a Half-Apsara, you have the same names as humans, being part of their society. However, your name may be different depending on where you were raised.

ANCESTRAL TRAITS

Ability Boosts: Charisma +2. Choose 1: Dexterity or Intelligence +1

Ability Flaw: Strength

Hit Points: 6

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet

Age: Bearing the curse of your ancestors, Half-Apsaras suffer with a short lifespan. Although you mature at around the same age as humans, your adulthood is short and you show signs of aging in your 20s. On average, half-apsaras live to their 50s.

Alignment: Although your original ancestors were of a good alignment, half-apsaras are influenced by the capriciousness of humans. Your alignment can vary.

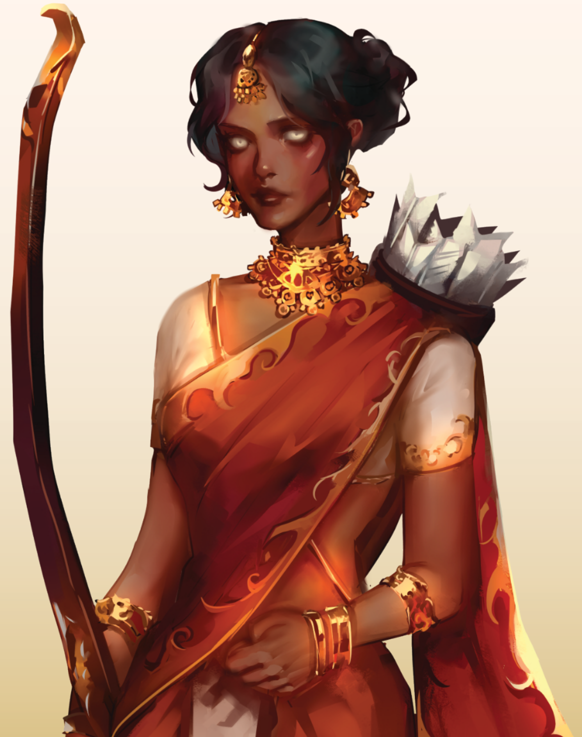
Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Svarga language due to your connection to your celestial ancestry.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Celestial Musician: You possess a natural talent for sweet, melodic music, much like your ancestors. You gain expert proficiency in Performance while using a musical instrument of your choice. Once per day, you can play your musical instrument as an action, imbuing your innate magic into the musical notes. All allies that can hear the music are healed 1d6 hit points. This healing increases to 2d6 at 5th level, 3d6 at 9th level, and 4d6 at 13th level.

Cloud Dancer: You come from a line of celestial dancers who awed the gods with their athleticism and gracefulness. You become trained in acrobatics or athletics (your choice). At 3rd level, you gain expert proficiency, and at 7th level, you gain master proficiency in this skill.

Court Attendant: Your ancestors were court attendants who navigated the courts of the gods



Half-Apsara by Dibyo Shree

and charmed visitors with their magnetism. You charm is disarming, allowing you to navigate social situations with ease. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus when making a Diplomacy check. Furthermore, if you critically fail a Diplomacy check, the result would be treated as if you failed instead.

ANCESTRY FEATS

1ST LEVEL

Heavenly Magic: Your Apsara ancestry grants you an innate divine spell. Choose one cantrip from the divine spell list. You can cast this spell as a divine innate spell at will. This cantrip is heightened to a spell level equal to half your level, rounded up.

Ethereal Grace: When you attempt to avoid being grabbed or knocked prone, you can roll an additional d20 and take the higher result.

5TH LEVEL

Enchanting Presence: Your inherent charm allows you to influence those around you more effectively. You can spend 1 minute performing or speaking to create a captivating atmosphere. Choose one of the following effects:

- You can grant a single ally within 30 feet a +2 circumstance bonus to their next Diplomacy or Performance check.
- You can impose a -2 penalty on the next Will save of a creature within 30 feet against your attempts to Influence or Demoralize them.

Asura Hunter: You have devoted yourself to battling the forces of evil and darkness. When facing a fiend or undead, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on saving throws against being frightened. If you roll a critical failure on a saving throw against being frightened, you get a failure instead.
- You deal an additional fire damage equal to half the spell level or one-quarter the item's level (minimum 1) every time you deal damage to a fiend of undead.

9TH LEVEL

Celestial Resilience: Your celestial heritage grants you increased resilience. You gain resistance 5 to one of the following damage types: acid, cold, electricity, or fire. You can choose a different damage type when you gain a new level.

Warding Light: You can call upon celestial light to protect yourself from harm. When you are attacked by a creature within 30 feet that you can see, you can use your reaction to impose a -5 penalty on the attack roll. This ability can be used twice per day. An attacker that is immune to the blinded condition is immune to this feature.

13TH LEVEL

Divine Legacy: *Prerequisites. Half-Apsara, must have a Charisma score of 18 or higher*

You gain a +2 status bonus to Charisma-based skill checks. Additionally, once per day as an action, you can channel the divine energy of your ancestry to heal yourself or an ally within 30 feet for 6d8 hit points. This healing increases to 10d8 at 17th level.

Celestial Shield: *Prerequisites. Warding Light.* Your connection to your celestial ancestry grants you enhanced defensive capabilities. You gain a +1 status bonus to AC. Additionally, when you use your Warding Light feature, you can also grant temporary hit points equal to your Charisma modifier to yourself or an ally within 30 feet.

HALF-ASURA

The blood of the underworld flows through you, and the breath of your demonic ancestors gives you life. Although you have the ability to choose right from wrong, the alluring call of your ancestors is always near.

Asuras are a race of demonic entities that directly oppose the gods. Their abode is **Patala**, the underworld, which is shared with Nagas and the God of Death. Asuras seek nothing more but to grow in power and find a new home for themselves. Seeking a new home, some of them travel to the land of the living, where they can corrupt mortals and establish their influence. One of their methods is to reproduce with humans, creating offspring who look like humans but carry a dark nature in their hearts.

Half-Asuras are born of this nefarious and seditious plot to corrupt the lands of Devabhumi, and many unknowingly serve as pawns to the benefit of the Asuras. Due to their human blood, they can distinguish right from wrong, good from bad. But the call to violence and evil is like a tantalizing treat that constantly tempts Half-Asuras to embrace their dark nature.

A Half-Asura initially looks like a human, but as their evil actions grow, their form twists to become less humanlike and more beastlike. A Half-Asura that is beginning to show signs of this transformation may find their hair growing coarse and matted, their nails sharp and hawk-like, their teeth lengthening, and their frame widening. When a Half-Asura fully emerges in their evil form, they look almost identical to their demonic progenitors.

Perhaps you strive to resist this abyssal nature with resolute firmness and prayers to the gods. Or perhaps you embrace it, seeking to control and channel it for your own ambitions.

Names: As a Half-Asura, you have the same names as humans. However, your name may be different depending on where you were raised.

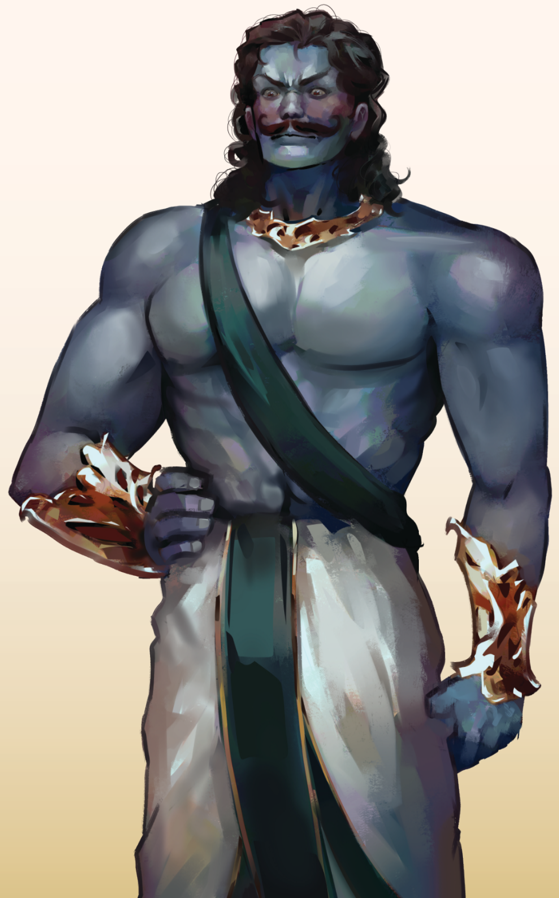
Ancestral Traits

Ability Boosts: +1 to Strength and Charisma, and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Wisdom

Hit Points: 10

Size: Medium



Half-Asura by Dibyo Shree

Speed: 25 feet

Age: Half-Asuras reach adulthood at 20 years and live up to 120 years.

Alignment: Half-Asuras often lean toward evil alignments due to their demonic heritage, but they have the freedom to choose their alignment. Those who resist their darker urges may struggle against this innate pull.

Darkvision: You can see in dim light as if it were bright light and in darkness as if it were dim light, but you can't discern color in darkness—only shades of gray.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Patala language due to your connection to your demonic ancestry.

Heritage Options

Diti's Scion: Your lineage is strongly tied to your Asura ancestors, granting you potent abilities and a more fearsome appearance. This heritage reflects your deep connection to demonic dark powers of Patala.

- You gain a +1 bonus to Strength or Constitution.

- You become trained in Intimidation, and you gain the Intimidating Glare skill feat.

Manu's Scion: You are more human than demonic, carrying a strong connection to humanity. This heritage emphasizes your ability to navigate the mortal world while grappling with your demonic lineage.

- You gain a +1 bonus to one ability score of your choice.

- You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects that would compel you to act against your alignment (such as dominate or charm effects).

Ancestry Feats

1st Level

Demonic Resilience: You gain resistance to fire 5. This increases to fire 10 at 10th level.

Vanquisher of Fear: You have trained your mind to hold firmly in the face of great fear and distress. You treat the Frightened effect as if it were one step less (Frightened 2 becomes Frightened 1, Frightened 1 has no effect, etc).

5th Level

Human Tenacity: Your human lineage provides you with a strong will and resilience against adversity. You gain a +1 bonus to your Will saves. Additionally, your hit points increase by 10.

Unholy Channel: You can cast *Fear* as a divine innate spell at will. At 9th level, you can heighten the spell to 3rd level.

9th Level

Inquisitive: Much like your asura and human ancestors, you have a strong desire to access hidden knowledge. When you make an Occultism check to Gather Information, you can treat the result one better than it is (critical failure is a failure, failure is a success, etc). Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to the Lore skill when trying to locate an Astra.

Form of the Asura: You can assume a frightening form for one minute, becoming Large for the duration and gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to your damage rolls. Your size returns to Medium when the effect ends. You can use this feature once per day.

13th Level

Fear Eater: *Prerequisites. Must have a Charisma score of 18 or higher.* You feed on the fear of others, and you terrify your foes on the battlefield.

Once per round, when you hit a creature with a melee attack, you can cause that creature to become flat-footed until the end of its next turn. This effect lasts for one round.

If the creature is frightened when you hit it, it takes an additional 1d6 mental damage.

Guardian of the Light: *Prerequisites: Must be of a good alignment.* Your resolve to protect the innocent and resist your darker nature allows you to channel your energies into a protective aura.

Once per day, you can create a protective aura with a radius of 30 feet for 1 minute. While within this aura, you and your allies gain a +2 status bonus to saving throws against fear and charm effects. Additionally, any enemy that enters or starts its turn in this aura must succeed at a Will save against your class DC or be frightened 1 until the end of its next turn.

Garuda

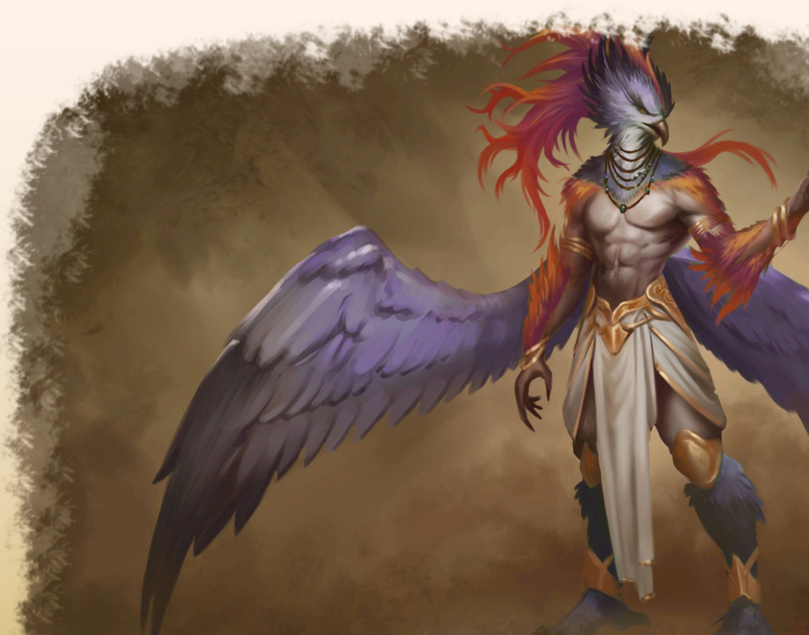
You sit comfortably upon a peak, scanning the horizon for any threats. Your wings stretch out lengthily on both sides, protecting your children from the blinding rays of Surya. The war with a nearby Naga clan has left your tribe dwindling in numbers, and after the chief was killed in battle, you are now the de facto ruler of your avian tribe.

Garudas (or Garudi for females) are fierce eagle-like creatures created by the god **Vishnu**, preferring them as mounts. According to legend, there was a pious sage named Kashyapa who had two wives named **Vinata** and **Kadru**. Both of the sage's wives desired children but were unable to conceive. In an attempt to have children, they both devoted their lives to Vishnu, who became pleased with the two women and granted them each a boon. Kadru asked for a thousand children, whereas Vinata asked for just two, who are equal to Kadru's thousand.

Vishnu answered both women's wishes with a large egg. When Kadru's egg hatched, a thousand Nagas emerged and populated the underworld. Whereas when Vinata's egg hatched, two glorious eagles emerged, a male and a female, who went on to reproduce and create a race of eagle-like creatures known as Garudas.

Conflict with Nagas: Your society has regular conflict with Nagas, who are technically your half brothers and half sisters. They are the antithesis of your nature, representing all that is opposite from you. While you soar the skies, they slither on the ground. You hunt during the day; they hunt during the night. You devour snakes for food while they devour your eggs.

Society: Garudas live in a competitive, merit-based society. While a garuda is young, they are encouraged by their parents to practice flight and hunt small critters—in preparation for the *Shahi Shikar*, a coming-of-age hunt. During this hunt, the young garuda is sent on a solitary quest to



Garuda by John Ric Detoon

find and hunt a dangerous creature such as a leopard or a tiger. If the garuda returns successfully, they are integrated into the society of hunters. If unsuccessful, then the garuda is exiled from society. Some garudas use the Shahi Shikar as a way to explore the world outside of their home and prefer to never return.

Perhaps you were unsuccessful on your hunt or flew too far and were unable to find your way back. Or perhaps you were a valuable hunter in a nest of garudas, but you left their company to achieve something greater.

Male Garuda Names: Advait, Chetas, Ekveer, Darsh, Dushyant, Girivar, Hari, Jagrav, Kairav, Kush, Lakshay, Mukund, Naman, Prayag, Saatvik, Yuvan.

Female Garudi Names: Aarika, Antari, Chitragandha, Dheemayi, Eni, Hansika, Iksha, Jiti, Kavya, Lavani, Manya, Navyi, Paridhi, Samiha, Tapasi, Yamini.

Ancestral Traits

Ability Boosts: +1 to Dexterity and Wisdom, and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Strength

Hit Points: 8

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet, and a flying speed of 40 feet (this speed is reduced to 20 feet if wearing medium or heavy armor).

Size: Your size is medium. The height of garudas varies, ranging from 5 feet to slightly over 7 feet.

Speed: Your base walking speed is 30 ft.

Age: Garudas reach maturity at 25 years and can live up to 110 years.

Alignment: Garudas are often drawn toward lawful alignments due to their connection with Vishnu, but individual alignment can vary.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Svarga language due to your connection to your heavenly ancestry.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Celestial Hunter: Your lineage is strongly tied to a society of hunters. Your unarmed strikes deal slashing damage and are considered claw attacks. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus on checks to grapple a creature. Your flying speed increases by 10 feet.

Stormcaller: Your lineage is tied to the elements, granting you a natural affinity for storms and weather.

You gain resistance 5 to electricity damage. If you take electricity damage, you can add half of that damage (rounded down) to your next damage roll.

When you fly, you can create gusts of wind to push your enemies. Once per round, you can use an action to create a small gust of wind that forces a medium or smaller creature within 30 feet to make a Fortitude save against your class DC. On a failure, the creature is pushed 10 feet away from you.

Ancestry Feats

1st Level

Aerial Superiority: When you make a ranged attack while flying, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to the attack roll.

Gust of Wind: Once per round, as a single action, you can create a gust of wind in a 15-foot cone. Creatures in the area must succeed at a Reflex save against your class DC or be pushed back 5 feet and become flat-footed until the end of your next turn.

5th Level

Eagle Eye: Your keen eyesight allows you to spot threats from great distances. You gain a +2 bonus to Perception checks to notice hidden or invisible creatures. Additionally, you can use the Seek action as a single action, allowing you to better identify potential threats.

Storm's Resilience: Your connection to storms enhances your natural defenses. You gain resistance 10 to electricity damage. Additionally, when you take electricity damage, you gain temporary hit points equal to half the damage taken (rounded down) for 1 minute.

9th Level

Razor Claws: Your unarmed strikes deal an additional 1d6 slashing damage. When a grappled creature tries to escape, you can make a claw strike against that creature as a reaction.

Thunderous Wings: While flying, you can expend two actions to unleash a thunderclap. Each creature within 30 feet of you must make a Fortitude save against your class DC. On a failure, they are deafened for 1 minute and take 2d6 sonic damage. On a success, they take half damage and are not deafened.

13th Level

Soaring Champion: When you take flight, you can choose to grant yourself a +2 circumstance bonus to your AC and saving throws for one minute. This ability can be used once per day and can be activated as an action when you take off.

Indra's Wrath: You can call upon a storm to aid you in battle. Once per day, you can create a localized storm in a 20-foot radius centered on you for 1 minute. The area is heavily obscured, and creatures within must succeed at a Fortitude save against your class DC or be blinded until the end of their next turn. At the beginning of each of your turns, as an action, you can deal 1d6 electricity damage to all creatures within the area. Creatures can attempt a Reflex save against your class DC to take half damage.

Vaanar

You nimbly swing through dense tree branches, your tail keeping you balanced as you jump from one branch to the next. Your body is covered in thick fur, protecting you from the elements and critters that roam the jungle. As nighttime approaches, you make your way back to your colony, which is full of Vaanars like you, all eating, playing games, and enjoying themselves.

Vaanars are intelligent monkey-like creatures that are known for their cunning and loyalty. They form colonies in the jungle and typically keep to themselves. They prove to be highly effective mercenaries or guides. Their loyalty is usually to their family or colony, but some vaanars can be loyal to their companions or employer.

Vaanars were created by Brahma during the Treta-Yuga to aid the god **Rama** in his battle against **Ravana**, an asura king. Vaanars proved to be crucial in the army of Rama, helping him defeat Ravana and rescue Sita, Rama's wife. Vaanars typically worship Rama and Hanuman, the two gods who were pivotal in the fight against Ravana. Their worship is directed towards wooden totems depicting Rama and Hanuman.

Society: Vaanars live in highly social, collaborative societies that are divided into numerous clans and tribes. As a Vaanar, your loyalty lies to your clan first and then your tribe. Young Vaanars are taught by the elderly in large Gurukulas (schools), where they are taught religion and language, as well as practical skills such as how to forage and build. Upon the age of ten, the young Vaanars "graduate" and are released to spend the days with their clan, where they grow accustomed to their daily duties.

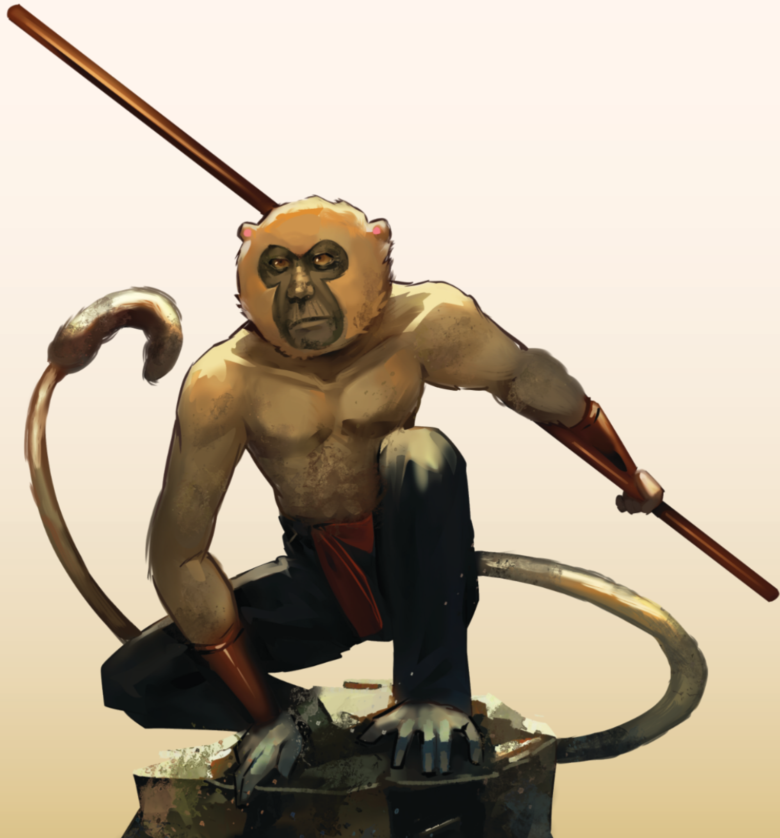
As a Vaanar grows older, his or her duties increase along with their status in their clan. A Vaanar's ultimate source of safety and identity comes from their clan. Being shunned or exiled from one's clan is a fate that is viewed as worse than death. As highly intelligent and social creatures, Vaanars cherish spending the entirety of their time with each other, bonding and working as their Dharma dictates. Losing this identity is a punishment reserved for the worst of criminals, such as murderers and traitors.

Perhaps you were exiled from your clan but decided to find another group of people that you can call your own. Or perhaps you voluntarily left your clan to seek a different life, to explore the opportunities of this land.

Example Clan Names: Bali, Baruch, Ghara, Kanda, Mekhala,Vara

Male Vaanar Names: Angada, Agir, Bala, Chatur, Garut, Indu, Jiva, Kacha, Lal, Lav, Nala, Nila, Sugriva, Uday, Vali, Vira.

Female Vaanar Names: Ajani, Atra, Bala, Charvi, Gargi, Indu, Ira, Jeevi, Kasi, Lekha,



Vanar by Dibyo Shree

Mantra, Sushena, Tara, Uma, Vajra.

ANCESTRAL TRAITS

Ability Boosts: You gain a +2 bonus to Dexterity and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Charisma

Hit Points: 7

Size: Medium

Speed: 25 feet; climbing speed of 20 feet (you cannot use your climbing speed if you are encumbered or wearing heavy armor).

Age: Vaanars mature at 20 years and have a lifespan of around 60 years.

Alignment: Vaanars are typically drawn to chaotic alignments but can vary individually.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Vaanar language.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Tailed Vaanar: You possess a long and nimble tail allows you to perform a variety of actions. You can perform the Steal action using your tail, with which you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your Thievery skill. You can also Disarm and Trip enemies with your tail. Your tail also aids you in climbing, granting you an additional 5 feet of climbing speed.

Tailless Vaanar: You do not possess a tail, instead possessing strong limbs and an upright gait. Your Strength scores increases by 1. Your walking speed increases by 5 feet. You can use your climbing speed even while wearing heavy armor.

ANCESTRY FEATS

1ST LEVEL

Agile Acrobat: Your natural agility allows you to perform remarkable feats. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Acrobatics checks. Additionally, when you succeed at an Acrobatics check to Escape, you can move up to 10 feet as part of the action.

Playful: Your natural nimbleness allows you to perform acrobatic tricks that amuse and distract. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Acrobatics checks to Create a Diversion or to perform tricks during performances. Once per day, you can use the Perform action to distract an opponent, imposing a -1 penalty to their next attack roll against you.

5TH LEVEL

Vaanar's Cunning: Your cunning mind has given you an edge over your peers. You gain the following benefits:

- Your wisdom or intelligence score increases by 1.
- Pick one skill that you are trained in. You now become an expert in that skill. At 9th level, you gain Master proficiency in that skill.

Simian Agility: Your agility shines when you need to make a quick escape. Once per round, when you make a successful Acrobatics check to Jump, you can increase your jump distance by 10 feet. Additionally, you can take an extra action to Dash as part of your Jump action.

9TH LEVEL

Cunning Maneuver: Your cunning mind allows you to outthink your opponents in combat. Once per round, when you successfully hit a creature with a melee attack, you can attempt an additional action to make an Acrobatics check against that creature's Fortitude DC. On a success, that creature is flat-footed against your attacks until the end of your next turn.

Primal Instincts: Your connection to your ancestors enhances your primal senses, allowing you to detect threats.

You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks to notice hidden creatures and traps. Once per day, the GM can reroll a failed Perception check to notice a creature or object.

13TH LEVEL

Monkey's Escape: You've perfected the art of escaping danger, making you hard to catch. When you are hit by a melee attack, you can use your reaction to attempt an Acrobatics check against the attacker's Reflex DC. On a success, you can immediately move up to 10 feet away without provoking attacks of opportunity. Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to saving throws against effects that would restrain or immobilize you.

NAGA

The light from the sun rays shines directly into your wide eyes as you walk on two legs, wandering through the busy marketplace. But tonight, you will finally be able to assume your true serpentine form when you leave this town. Your hands will morph into your body, and your legs will transform into a thick tail, covered with shiny scales.

You are a Naga (Nagini for female), the child of Kadru, dweller of Nagaloka. A glowing meena gem adorns your head, shining with a light to help you see in the underworld.

Nagas are cobra-like shapeshifters that come from the underworld, dwelling in jungles and urban sprawls. In your true form, you are a serpent, and you can transition to any state between a human and a serpent. When in human form, you will always retain certain snake-like features, such as faint scales, yellow eyes, and your meena.

Shapeshifting Gradient: A naga's original form resembles a large cobra, but it also has a human form that is unique to itself and resembles no one else. The naga is able to shapeshift into any form between its original cobra-like form and its human form. This means it can retain a cobra-like tail and have the torso of a human, retain its hooded serpentine head and have human legs, or have many other combinations.

Troubled Romance: The beauty of nagas makes it easy for humans to easily fall in love with one. This usually occurs when a hunter or traveler encounters a naga while they are in their human form and are enchanted by their beauty. Relationships between humans and nagas are often troubled, however, as each of their families will not accept such a union. Furthermore, nagas are unable to reproduce with humans, so couples who manage to unite cannot conceive children.

Male Naga Names: Abhinaparivara, Abhoga, Bahyakarna, Chatramukha, Gavampati, Hullura, Kalasapotaka, Mahamanasvi, Nisthanaka, Rathabhiridha, Virupaksa.

Female Nagini Names: Aryaki, Bilvapanduri, Dhananjayi, Grasati, Halika, Kalamasi, Kumudaksi, Puspadamstri, Sagarakuksi, Sumana, Ulupi.Racial Traits:

ANCESTRAL TRAITS

Ability Boosts: You gain a +2 bonus to Charisma and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Strength

Hit Points: 7

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet (this speed is the same regardless of your form).

Age: Your lifespan is longer than average, maturing at 20 and living to 120 years old.

Alignment: You are drawn to chaotic alignments.

Darkvision: You can see in darkness and dim light just as well as you can see in bright light, though your vision in darkness is in black and white.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Patala language.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Serpentine Heritage: You possess two forms, a cobra form and a human form. As two actions, you can shapeshift into any form between your serpent form and human form. This means you can retain a serpentine head with a human torso, human legs with a serpent tail, or any other combination. However, you cannot use the abilities from your Serpent Form feature unless you are in full serpent form.

In your serpent form, you have the following traits:

- You lose the ability to hold weapons or use somatic components for spells.
- Your armor and equipment meld into your skin, giving you an AC of 12 + your Dexterity modifier.
- You gain darkvision.
- You gain a Bite attack (finesse) that deals 1d6 piercing damage and 1d6 poison damage.

You have a colorful jewel that is embedded in your forehead, shining with light that changes colors according to your mood and disposition. This jewel shines with bright light up to 10 feet and dim light up to 10 feet. The meena will always remain, regardless of your form. If you are knocked unconscious, it loses its light. You can cover the jewel with a turban or head wrap to suppress its light.

Ancestry Feats

1st Level

Serpent's Agility: Your natural agility allows you to perform remarkable feats. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Acrobatics checks. Additionally, when you succeed at an Acrobatics check to Escape, you can move up to 10 feet as part of the action.

Poison Adept: You have an especially potent dose of venom running through your body. You are resistant to poison damage equal to half your level, rounded down (minimum 1). Additionally, the poison damage in your Bite attack increases to 1d8.

5th Level

Captivating Form: You lean towards your human form, preferring to win over others through your beauty and natural charm. You gain the following benefits:

- You can cast the Charm spell once per day as an innate primal spell.
- When in human form, you gain a +1 bonus to your Charisma.
- When in human form, you are indistinguishable from a regular human.

Serpent's Finesse: Your shapeshifting becomes more refined. You can change your shape as a single action rather than a two-action activity. When in your snake form, your movement increases by 5 feet, and you gain a climb speed of 15 feet.

9th Level

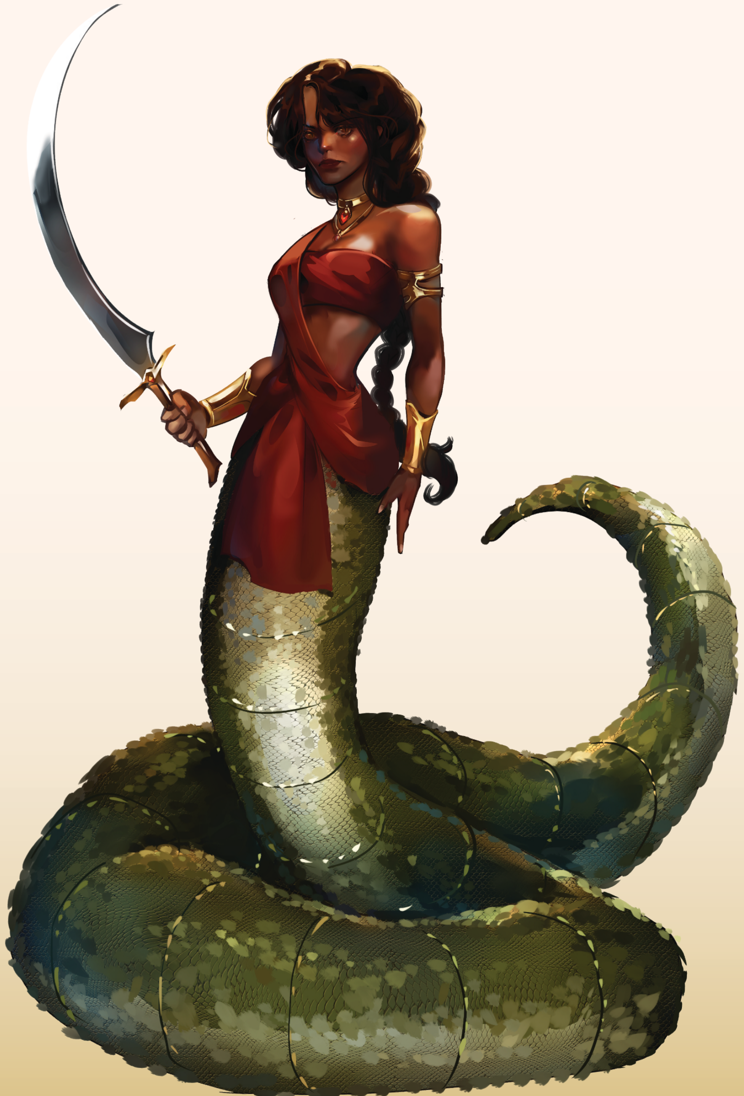
Captivating Whisper: *Prerequisite. Captivating Form.* You can communicate in hushed, persuasive tones that captivate your listeners. When you use the Diplomacy skill to Gather Information or make an Impression, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus. Additionally, if you succeed at the check, you can attempt to Demoralize the target as a free action.

Poison Master: *Prerequisite. Poison Adept.* Your poison becomes more lethal. The poison damage in your Bite attack increases to 1d12. When you hit with your Bite, the target must make a Fortitude saving throw against your class DC or become Drained 1 (Drained 2 if critically hit).

13th Level

Serpent's Resilience: Your connection to your serpentine nature grants you increased resistance. You gain resistance 5 to an additional type of damage (your choice of acid, cold, or electricity). Additionally, you gain a +2 bonus to Fortitude saves against the Bleed and Drained effects.

Meena Empowerment: You can draw on the power of your Meena to bolster your magic. Once per day, when you cast a spell, you can add 1d4 to the spell's damage or increase its duration by 1 round. Additionally, while your Meena is visible, you gain a +1 bonus to spell attack rolls and spell saving throws.



Nagini by Dibyo Shree

YAKSHI

The dense forest is your home, and the sacred Ashoka tree is your mother. Your hands and feet are adorned with the jewelry of the wild—flowers, insect shells, and smooth stones. Your hair grows like vines, enveloping your head and neck. You are a Yakshi (Yaksha for male). There are very few like you, but there are many who seek to discover you.

Yakshis are nature spirits found in remote forests, far away from the encroaching hand of civilization. The origins of Yakshis are unclear. Some say they were created by Kubera, the god of wealth. Some say they always existed as minor gods to watch over nature. Some say they were reincarnated vengeful spirits.

Guardian of the Forests: You have a strong attachment to the forest, your first home. You may feel strong disgust or anger when you observe someone disrespecting a forest. Creatures have been cursed or even killed after defiling the home of Yakshis. Many travelers bring offerings such as flowers to ease the minds of Yakshis while journeying through their forests.

Curious Mind: Despite your attachment to your home, you possess a very curious and inquiring mind. Discovering other cultures, civilizations, and lifestyles is very interesting to you. While you were young, you may have even followed a traveler all the way to their destination to sate your curiosity.

Male Yaksha Names: Ashoka, Anopama, Bala, Garga, Ghora, Hamsa, Kana, Kesanta, Manohar, Vikala, Vira.

Female Yakshi Names: Ambika, Chandri, Kameshvari, Kesini, Mekhala, Nati, Padmavati, Padmini, Rohini, Venda.

ANCESTRAL TRAITS

Ability Boosts: You gain a +2 bonus to Wisdom and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Dexterity

Hit Points: 7

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet

Age: Yakshis mature at 40 years and can live up to 300 years.

Alignment: Yakshis are typically drawn to chaotic alignments.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Varali language.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Charred: You have been charred by an unfortunate fire that took place in your home. Your golden-brown skin is now gray and pale. The thick vines that you once had have now burned out. As you endured this change, you have only emerged stronger. You gain the following benefits:

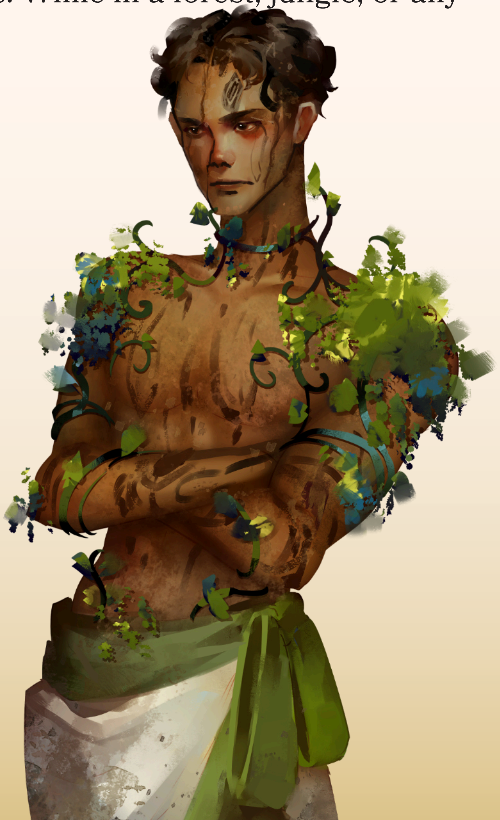
- Your hit points increase by an amount equal to 2 times your level (level 1 increases by 2, level 2 increases by 4, etc).
- You gain resistance 5 to fire.
- At 5th level, you gain the ability to cast *Floating Flame* once per day as an innate primal spell.

Thornleaf: As a Thornleaf Yakshi, your body is covered in small hooked thorns that tear the flesh of any living creature that attempts to get too close. Any greature that attempts to Grab you takes piercing damage equal to half your level (minimum 1). If you Grab a creature, it takes this additional piercing damage as part of your Grab action.

ANCESTRY FEATS

1ST LEVEL

Watchful Guardian: You have spent years quietly observing the forest, protecting it against foul forces. While in a forest, jungle, or any



Yaksha by Dibyo Shree

environment with trees, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks made to Seek hidden creatures. Any creatures that you discover in this way are flat-footed against your attacks.

Bird Whisperer: You can hear and understand the chatter of birds. You can ask questions of, receive answers from, and use the Diplomacy skill with birds. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Make an Impression on birds.

5th Level

Calming Presence (Aura, Primal): Your very presence calms and soothes your allies, easing their mind. All allies within 30 feet of you gain a +1 circimstance bonus to Will saves. At 9th level, this bonus increases to +2.

Nature's Shelter: Your connection to nature manifests in a protective way, with vines and stones naturally wrapping around you. You are always lightly obscured when standing in dense vegetation, such as forests or jungles, making it harder for enemies to target you. You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks to Hide or Sneak while in natural environments. At 9th level, this bonus increases to +2.

9th Level

Deep Roots: Your roots grow strong and burrow deep into the soil. While standing on dirt, you gain tremorsense (imprecise) up to 30 feet. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to saves against being moved against your will (Shove, Trip, etc).

Nature's Vengeance: Your attacks contain the silent fury of the forest. When making weapon or spell attack rolls, you deal additional force damage equal to half your level on a hit. On a critical hit, your opponent is flat-footed against your attacks for one round.

13th Level

Curse of the Yakshi ◆ *Prerequisite. Nature's Vengeance*. You channel the wrath of nature to unleash a devastating curse. Once per day, as a single action, you can make a melee or ranged attack that deals an additional 6d6 damage of the appropriate type (bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing), as well as an additional 3d6 damage of acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage (your choice). This attack automatically critically hits if it is made against a creature that has harmed the forest or its inhabitants.

Summon Nature's Ally: Your connection to the natural world allows you to call upon its guardians. Once per day, you can summon a creature with the animal trait to fight alongside you for an hour. The creature follows your commands and acts on your initiative. The creature can be up to level 5 (level 7 at 15th level).

Jambavan

Thick fur covers every inch of your body, protecting you from the elements that you call home. Your limbs are strong and wide, and your smile reveals sharp, pointy teeth. Most of your life has been solitary, as you spend your days hunting and building. So far, you've only encountered a few dozen of your race. You know yourself as a Jambavan, king of the bears.

Territorial: Jambavans are territorial humanoids that resemble bears but have the ability to walk upright. They do not form societies, instead preferring to wander the forests and constantly move from place to place. They have the ability to communicate with bears, allowing them to have eyes and ears all over their territory.

Crafty: A Jambavan is an expert hunter and builder, constructing small cabins across their territory for them to stay while traveling. Some Jambavans have even constructed boats and aerial vehicles to travel far and wide with. While most Jambavans stay in the forest by themselves, those that have encountered civilization tend to become expert architects and rangers.

Society: Jambavans are typically raised by their mother for a period of five to ten years. A young Jambavan will learn how to use its instinct to hunt and intellect to build. Once it is ready, it voluntarily separates from its mother and carves its own territory.

Male Jambavan Names: Ash, Dev, Gir, Hara, Krish, Kaal, Neel, Om, Oja, Tavasya, Tarush, Ved, Veer.

Female Jamvaban Names: Asha, Chann, Diya, Leela, Iya, Jiva, Kimi, Koyal, Maya, Nari, Rupa, Ruva,

Ancestral Traits

Ability Boosts: You gain a +2 bonus to Strength and a +1 bonus to one other ability score of your choice.

Ability Flaw: Charisma

Hit Points: 10

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 feet, climbing speed of 20 feet (you cannot use your climbing speed if you are encumbered or wearing heavy armor).

Age: You mature at an earlier age of 10, but your total lifespan is longer than average. You can live up to 150 years old.

Alignment: You are drawn to chaotic alignments.

Ancestral Language: You can read, write, and speak the Varali language.

HERITAGE OPTIONS

Forest Bear: You are experienced at moving through thick vegetation and navigating the terrain of the forest. You ignore difficult terrain from foliage, plants, or natural obstacles in the forest or jungle environments.

Additionally, your heightened senses help you detect threats in the thick forest. You gain darkvision. You also gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Perception checks to Seek hidden creatures.

Mountain Bear: You hails from the tall peaks and craggy cliffs of mountains, where strength and resilience are key to survival. You are adapted to harsh, high-altitude conditions. You gain cold resistance equal to half your level (minimum 1). Additionally, you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Athletics checks for traversing difficult terrain. Your Constitution increases by 1.

ANCESTRY FEATS

1ST LEVEL

Bear Claws: You can use your sharp claws to attack. Your claws are an unarmed attack that deals 1d6 slashing damage. Your claws are in the brawling weapon group and have the agile and finesse traits.

Craftsman's Touch: You are skilled in building and repairing. You become trained in Crafting, and you gain a +1 circumstance bonus to Crafting checks when building or repairing structures, vehicles, or tools.

5TH LEVEL

Friend of the Bears: You can communicate with bears of any species. You can speak with bears as if you shared a language. Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks to Make an Impression or Request something from a bear.

Advanced Builder: You've mastered building and crafting. You gain the Specialty Crafting feat, choosing structures, vehicles, or tools. Additionally, when you Craft or Repair these items, reduce the materials cost by half.

9TH LEVEL

Savage Maul: You can make more powerful strikes with your claws. Your Strength score increases by 1. Your claw unarmed attack damage increases to 1d8, and your claws gain the forceful trait.

Leader of the Bears: Your connection with bears deepens, and they follow you as allies. You gain the Animal Companion feat, but you can only choose a bear companion. If you already have an animal companion, you can add the savage template to it at no cost.

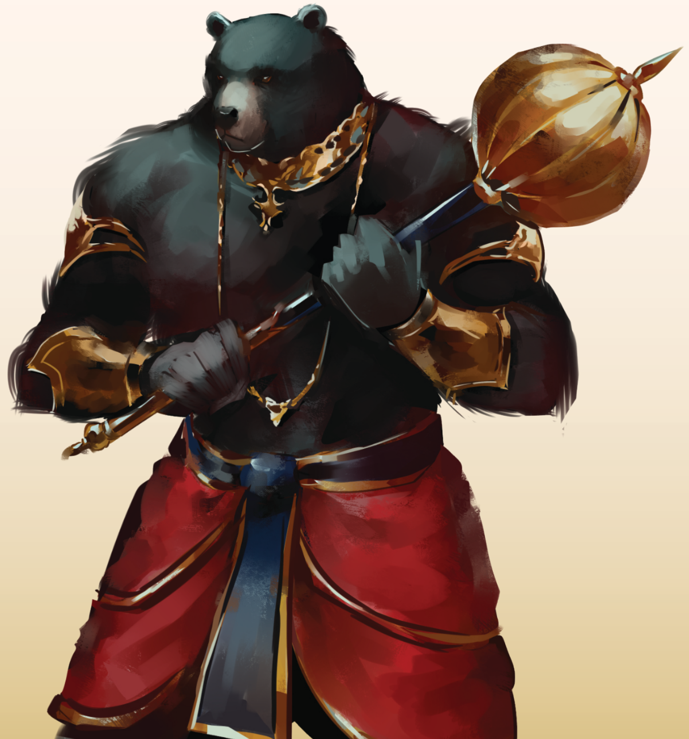
13TH LEVEL

King of the Bears: You are a legendary figure among bears, commanding respect and loyalty from all species of bears within your territory and beyond.

Prerequisites: Friend of the Bears, Leader of the Bears, Animal Companion (bear)

Once per day, you can use a 3-action activity to call upon bears within a mile radius. This ability functions as a heightened *Summon Animal* spell (heightened to 7th level), but you can only summon bears. The bears remain for up to 1 hour, and they treat you as their king, following your commands as if under a Command an Animal action. Bears summoned by this ability are always helpful toward you and follow your directions without needing checks. Additionally, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to Nature or Diplomacy checks when influencing bears or bear-like creatures, and bears summoned through this ability can use the Support action as if they were your animal companion.

If you already have a bear animal companion, you can direct both your companion and the summoned bears simultaneously, without splitting your actions.



Jambavan by Dibyo Shree

Backgrounds

The law of the universe is Dharma, which is the duty of each individual in their lifetime. One way that Dharma manifests in society is through their backgrounds. One's background shapes and affects an individual through their lifetime. Their background affects how an individual speaks, acts, and sees the world. A scholar may see the world as a space for spiritual enlightenment, while a soldier may see it as a proving ground for heroism and glory.

Generally, most backgrounds from the Core Rulebook are compatible with the world of Devabhumi. Feel free to reflavor those as you see fit. Additional backgrounds that are specific to Devabhuni are listed below.

AYURVED

An Ayurved is a physician and practitioner of Ayurveda, the traditional healing medicine of Devabhumi. Practitioners believe that an illness is caused by the disturbance of both the body and soul and that both must be restored in order to achieve health.

Ayurvedic treatments include herbs, minerals, yoga, and massage. Proficiency in this school requires almost a decade of rigorous education under a Guru. As an Ayurved, you have studied long and hard to achieve this level of proficiency.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Intelligence, and one is a free ability boost. You are trained in the Medicine and Nature skills. You gain the Natural Medicine skill feat.

GURU

A guru is a teacher who has extensively studied their subject, usually from another guru. Due to their expertise, they become an instructor and guide for novices. The relationship between a student and a guru is akin to a parent to a child. The student shows great respect and obedience in exchange for the knowledge that the guru provides. As a guru, you may be adept in one of many subject matters, including history, magic, religion, or even war.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be in Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost. Choose two skills from Arcana, History, Medicine, Nature, Religion, or Survival. You gain the Experienced Professional skill feat.

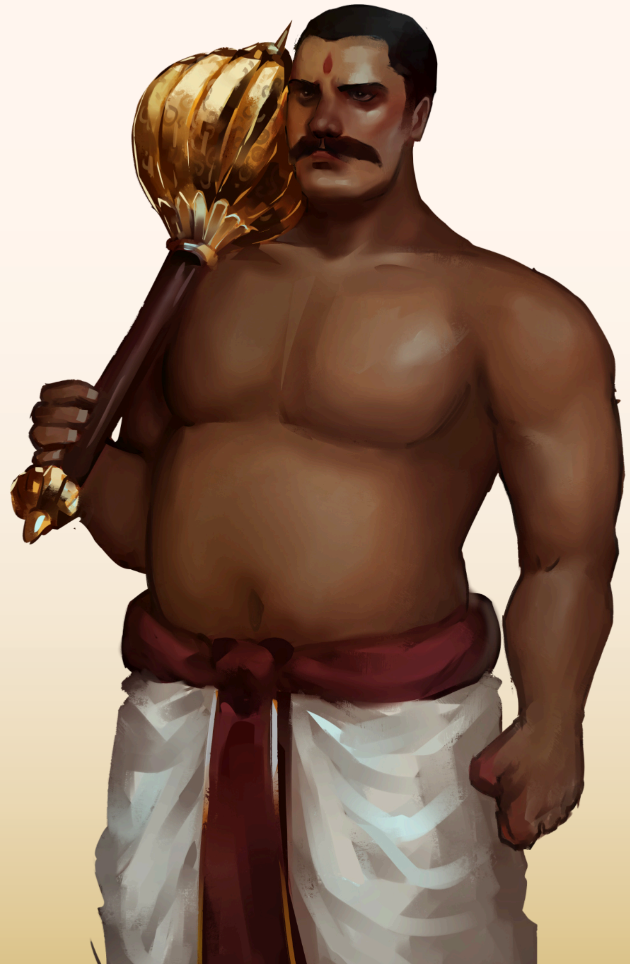
PEHELWAN

You have known nothing but hard training since you were a child. Every day, your guru roused you from your sleep and made you perform back-breaking exercises until you could no longer stand.

All for one purpose—to be a wrestler in the *akhada*, a traditional mud arena. As you grew older, you competed in professional tournaments and made a name for yourself in pehelwani, the sport of wrestling. You managed to earn a good amount of coin, and people chanted your name in the streets.

Now, you have retired and pursued other goals in life. Although you no longer compete in the akhada, your mind still remembers the hard training you endured, and your limbs still possess the prowess of a wrestler.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be in Strength, and one is a free ability boost. You are trained in the Athletics and Intimidation skills. You gain the Titan Wrestler feat.



Wrestler by Dibyo Shree

Sarathee

You have picked up the reigns of a chariot (*ratha*), whether as a rider or a charioteer. The galloping of horses, the rhythmic spinning of the chariot wheels, and the fresh wind on your face are all feelings you are familiar with. Whether you have bravely navigated a chariot in battle or provided carriage services for the nobility, you are well proficient with riding and handling a chariot.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Dexterity, and one is a free ability boost. You are trained in the Athletics and Nature skills. You gain the Ride skill feat.

Yogi

Experienced in the ancient art of yoga, your life is an extension of your craft. You have meditated on top of mountains, performed asanas within caves, and have pushed your mind and body to the limit in the pursuit of yoga.

You have entered into states of deep meditation that lets you transcend the self, and you have studied occult practices of Tantra, allowing you to feel the various flows of energy around you.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to Wisdom, and one is a free ability boost. You are trained in the Athletics and Occultism skills. You gain the Assurance skill feat.

Feats

Whether your character is a hulking athlete, a studious scholar, or a conniving entertainer, there is always a use for them. The following feats are specific to Devabhumi, but others from the Core Rulebook may also be used.

Bhakt (level 1)

You are a devout devotee of a particular god. You have performed elaborate pujas, visited holy sites, and donated to temples to please your god. Your life is dedicated to a higher being. You gain the following benefits:

- Increase one ability score of your choice by 1.
- You gain a +1 status bonus on all saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Dhanudara (level 1)

Prerequisite: Proficiency in longbows. Your character is an expert with the bow, as a result of years of practice and blessings from the gods. This feat allows you to follow in the steps of the legendary archers of history, such as Arjuna, Karna, and Ekalavya. You gain the following benefits:

- Your ranged attacks with bows deal an additional 1 damage. This damage increases to 2 at 5th level.
- As a reaction, ↺ you may attempt to intercept a ranged weapon attack that is fired within 30 feet of you. Make an attack roll with your bow. If your attack is greater than the attack roll of the projectile, then you intercept the attack.

Fierce Hunter (level 1)

Years of tracking and pursuing your prey have made you into a highly effective hunter. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain low-light vision. If you already have low-light vision, you gain darkvision instead.
- When you score a critical hit, your damage dice are tripled instead of doubled.

Gadadhari (level 1)

Prerequisite: Strength 13 or higher, proficiency with maces. You have mastered the art of fighting with a gada (mace). This feat allows you to follow in the footsteps of famous mace-wielders such as Bheema, Duryodhana, and Hanuman. You gain the following benefits:

- Your melee attacks with maces deal an additional 1 damage. This damage increases to 2 at 5th level.
- When you score a critical hit with a mace, the target must succeed at a Fortitude save against your Class DC or be stunned for 1 round.

Hathi-Yodha (level 1)

You possess the valuable ability to tame and ride elephants into battle. Your skill was honed over years of learning and practice. Now, you gain the following benefits:

- You gain proficiency with elephants as mounts.
- You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on all checks to control your elephant.
- You can attempt to tame elephants in the wild. Taming an elephant requires 60 days of training, with at least 8 hours of training each day, and equipment worth 50 gp.

Ratha-Yodha (Level 1)

You not only know how to ride a chariot, but you also know how to fight with one. You are a master of the noble art of chariot warfare. You gain the following benefits:

- You gain proficiency with chariots.
- You gain a +2 circumstance bonus on checks made to control or repair your chariot.
- While riding a chariot, your ranged weapon attacks do not take the penalty for being outside the normal range.
- While riding a chariot, your melee attacks deal an additional 1d4 damage.

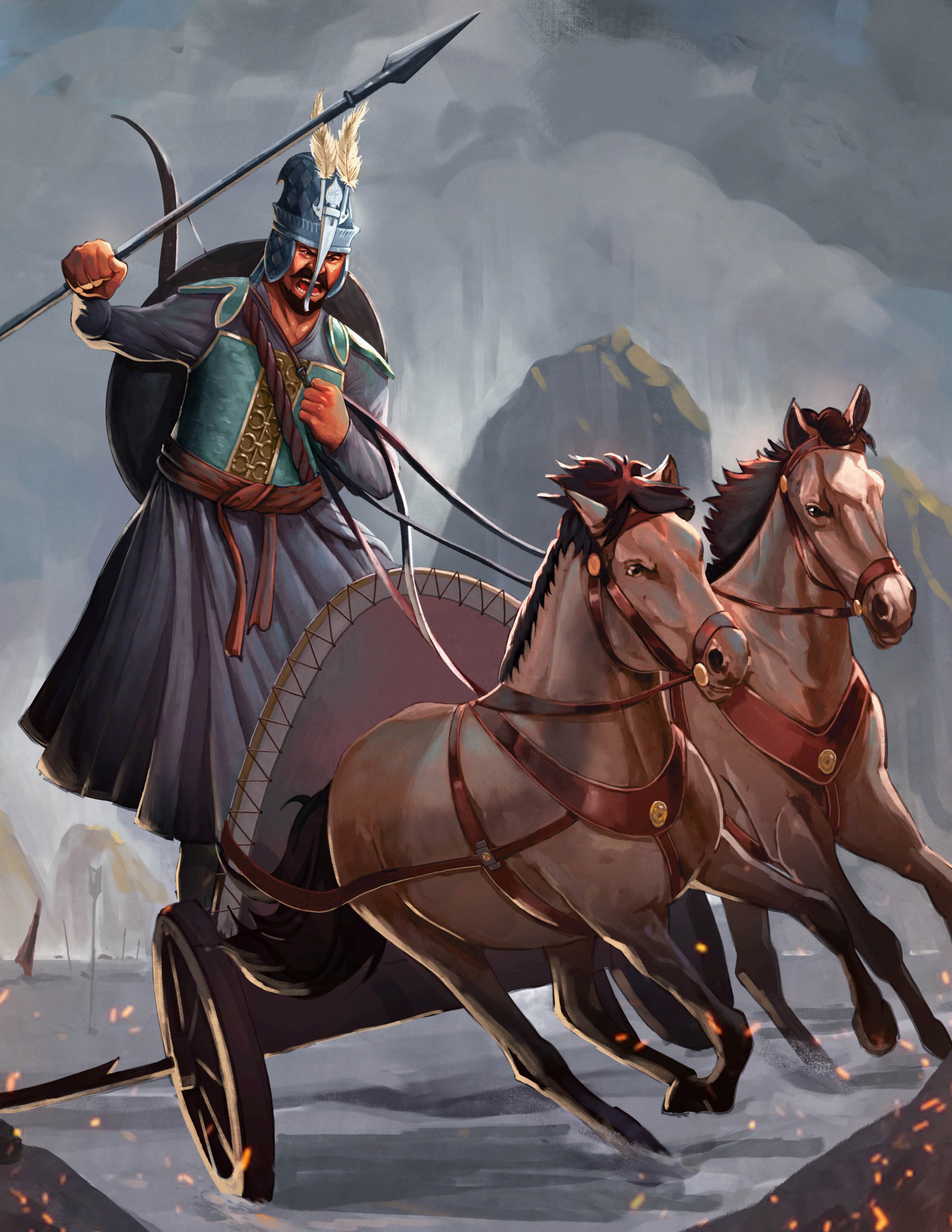
Wrestler (level 1)

As a child of the wrestling ring, your character has grown strong and mighty. You cain the following benefits:

- Your strength score increases by 1.
- You gain a +1 circumstance bonus to your Fortitude DC when resisting an

opponent's attempts to Grapple you or Swallow you Whole.

Victory of Meghananda by Raja Ravi Varma. Public Domain.



Equipment

The flames of the forge roar as a blacksmith tempers a fine talvar for a wealthy patron. A groom brushes the hair of a large gray stallion, one that will fetch a fine price. A group of religious pilgrims are heard across the road, their wooden sandals clapping with each step.

A land of extremes such as this one requires the right equipment before undertaking any journey or adventure. The inhabitants of Devabhumi know that one can never be too prepared in a land full of such danger and opportunity.

A Technological Oasis: In the Dvapara Yuga, science and magic has advanced the world, farther than it has ever achieved before. Crafty blacksmiths create armor from the strongest steel that the land has to offer and armored chariots are crafted by innovative engineers to give their nation's armies an edge.

However, these technological advancements are limited to large cities and metropolises. The technology in much of rural Devabhumi has not advanced much farther than the knowledge of basic crafting, fire, and woodworking. As a result, there is a large cultural and economic disparity between cities and remote villages. Characters hailing from a small village in the jungle may be shocked to see the day-to-day magical effects inside a large city, whereas a character from the city may scoff at the primitiveness of a small village.

MOUNTS & VEHICLES:

Heroes in Devabhumi may ride upon a variety of mounts and vehicles, from horses to magical chariots to mighty elephants. The ability to pilot and control these vehicles requires specialized backgrounds or proficiency in land or water vehicles.

Listed below are special mounts and vehicles found in Devabhumi. The majority of mounts from the Core Rulebook can also be found and used in this world.

CHARIOT

The chariot is the vehicle of choice for nobility, kings, and queens. Each chariot traditionally carries the banner of the famous warrior that rides it. The chariot has room for two: the rider and the charioteer that controls the horses. A chariot requires at least one horse to pull it and a capable charioteer to pilot the chariot. Additional horses increase the speed of the chariot.

- 1 horse: 40 ft.
- 2 horses: 50 ft.
- 3 horses: 60 ft.
- 4 horses: 70 ft.

While a character assumes the position of the charioteer, they can pilot the chariot using their action. Whenever a character is a rider, they can use their action normally and use a free action to command the charioteer. The charioteer and the rider take their turns at the same time.

Mount	Cost	Speed
Chariot	20 gp.	–
Gajasimha	50 gp.	60 ft.
Elephant	100 gp.	40 ft.
Farasa Bahari	150 gp.	60 ft., swim 60 ft.
Horse, Bhimthadi	20 gp.	60 ft.
Horse, Kathiawari	10 gp.	60 ft.
Makara	100 gp.	60 ft. swim

Charioteer by Allan Damaso.c

While a rider is within their chariot, they gain the following benefits.

Cover: Creatures that occupy a space inside the chariot gain lesser cover.

Opportunity Attacks: Opportunity attacks made against the rider are at a -2 circumstance penalty. Attacks made against the chariot are normal.

The chariot is a vehicle that can be attacked and destroyed like any other vehicle. The chariot can be fortified and improved with upgrades.

CHARIOT

Price 200 gp.

Space 5 feet long, 5 feet wide, 4 feet high

Crew 1 charioteer, 1 rider

Piloting Check Driving Lore (DC 14) or Nature (DC 16 to DC 24, depending on pulling creature)

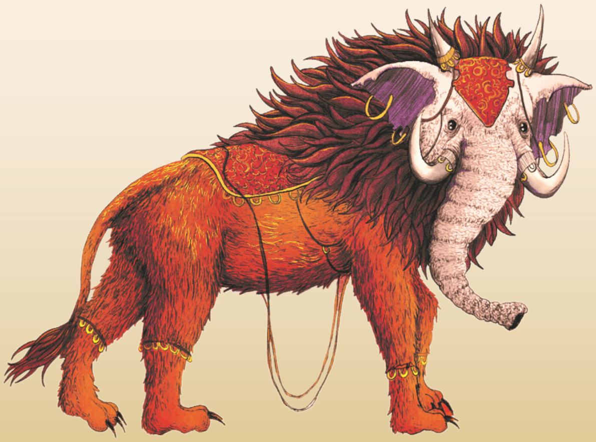
AC 10**; Fort** +6

Hardness 5**, HP** 14 (BT 7)**; Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

GAJASIMHA

This creature has the head of an elephant with a trunk and the body of a lion. It is not very large, growing to be slightly smaller than a horse. The southern kingdom of Thaara is famous for taming these creatures and using them as mounts.

When tamed, they serve as tough and loyal mounts, capable of replacing horses. Their tusks and claws provide adequate self defense, as their irregular shape prevents armor from being worn.



Gajasimha by Marlon Felipe Ruiz

GAJASIMHA

Large Animal, Level 1

Perception +5; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +7

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1

AC 14; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

HP 24

Buck ⤾ DC 16

Speed 40 feet

Melee ◆ gore +6, **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Melee ◆ claws +6, **Damage** 1d6 +4 slashing

ELEPHANT

This elephant comes from the forests of eastern and southern Devabhumi. It is intelligent and easily trained to obey commands. This breed of elephant has a devastating charge in battle and is used in war to break enemy lines.

To ride an elephant into battle, you must have a specialized proficiency in elephants. This proficiency is acquired through specific backgrounds, feats, or training.

When riding an elephant, you can only make melee attacks with weapons that have the reach property. Likewise, only melee attacks with the reach property can target you. Your ranged attacks are made normally.

ELEPHANT

Huge Animal, Level 4.

Perception +12; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Athletics +13, Survival +12

Str +6, **Dex** +0, **Con** +5, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1

AC 18**; Fort** +18**, Ref** +11**, Will** +13

HP 95

Speed: 30 feet

Melee ◆ gore +8 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+6 piercing

Melee ◆ stomp +8 (one prone creature), **Damage** 2d10+6 bludgeoning

Knockdown Charge ◆◆ The elephant can use this ability once per turn. If it moves at least 20 feet in a straight line, all creatures in a line 10 feet wide must make a DC 21 Fortitude save. On a failure, they are knocked prone.

FARASA BAHARI

This legendary horse is found in the Great Churning, tamed by the nation of Jalpurush. Its fur is a rich emerald green as its body is covered in algae. The Farasa Bahari is amphibian, able to live in the water and on land. It typically lives on the bottom of the ocean, but swims up to the coast to graze on seaweed and kelp.

FARASA BAHARI

Large Animal, Level 2, Amphibious.

Perception +6; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +8

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** -3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

AC 14; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

HP 35

Buck ⤾ DC 16

Speed 60 feet, swim 60 feet.

Melee ◆ hooves +5, **Damage** 1d6+3 bludgeoning

Gallop ◆◆ The Farasa Bahari Strides twice. It has a +10-foot circumstance bonus to its Speed during these Strides.

Horse, Bhimthadi

This fine horse breed originates from the rugged terrain of the Sher Range and is specifically bred for war by the Avanti people. Known for its strength and agility, this horse is a staple of armies in the central plains of Devabhumi.

Horse, Bhimthadi

Large Animal, Level 2

Perception +6; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +11

Str +5, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -2

AC 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +4

HP 35

Buck ↺ DC 17

Speed 40 feet

Melee ◆ hooves +8, **Damage** 1d6+5 bludgeoning

Gallop ◆◆ The Bhimthadi Horse Strides twice. It has a +10-foot circumstance bonus to its Speed during these Strides.

Horse, Kathiawari

This breed of horse is adapted to long journeys in the desert with minimal food and water. It is popular in the Kavacha desert.

Horse, Kathiawari

Large Animal, Level 1

Perception +7; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +7, Athletics +11

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -2

Fatigue-Resistant. This creature has a +2 circumstantial bonus against being fatigued when travelling and requires only half the amount of rations that a horse would normally require.

AC 15; **Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

HP 25

Buck ↺ DC 15

Speed 40 feet

Melee ◆ hooves +6, **Damage** 1d6+5 bludgeoning

Gallop ◆◆ The Kathiawari Horse Strides twice. It has a +10-foot circumstance bonus to its Speed during these Strides.

Makara

A rare sea-dwelling mount with the head of an elephant and the body of a crocodile. It uses its trunk to breathe air like any land-dwelling mammal, but lives and feeds in the sea. It is used by human and vaanar tribes on the east coast.

They can be rode upon in a manner similar to a horse. Naval warriors often engage in full-scale battles in the sea while riding these mounts, armed with spears, axes, and bows.

Makara

Large Animal, Level 2

Perception +6; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Athletics +8, Survival +6

Str +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -2

Siege. The makara's gore attack deals double damage to ships and naval vessels.

AC 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5

HP 30

Buck ↺ DC 18

Speed 20 feet, swim 40 feet.

Melee ◆ ram +7, **Damage** 1d8+3 bludgeoning

Melee ◆ bite +7, **Damage** 1d8+3 piercing

Battering Ram ◆◆ The Makara swims and then makes a ram strike. As long as it moved at least 20 feet, it gains a +1 circumstance bonus to its attack roll. A Large or smaller creature hit by this attack must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be slowed 1 for 1 round.

Equipment for Elephants

A variety of materials can be used to protect the elephant from blows. These take time to make and can be expensive. An elephant can only benefit from one armor at a time.

Leather Pads (100 gp): Armor class +2. Weight: 40 lbs.

Chain Links (200 gp): Armor class +3. Speed reduced by 10 feet. Weight: 150 lbs.

Lamellar Plates (500 gp): Armor class +4. Speed reduced by 20 feet. Weight: 250 lbs.

Elephant Swords (50 gp): A pair of sharp blades that can be attached to an elephant's tusks to make them deadlier in battle. This weapon allows for greater carnage; an elephant can throw a creature in the air and cut it in half with these swords.

When equipped, the elephant gains the following attack: **Melee** ◆ elephant swords +10 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+8 slashing

Chariot Fortifications

A chariot can be fortified with a variety of materials, each with different benefits and drawbacks. Only one fortification can be used at a time.

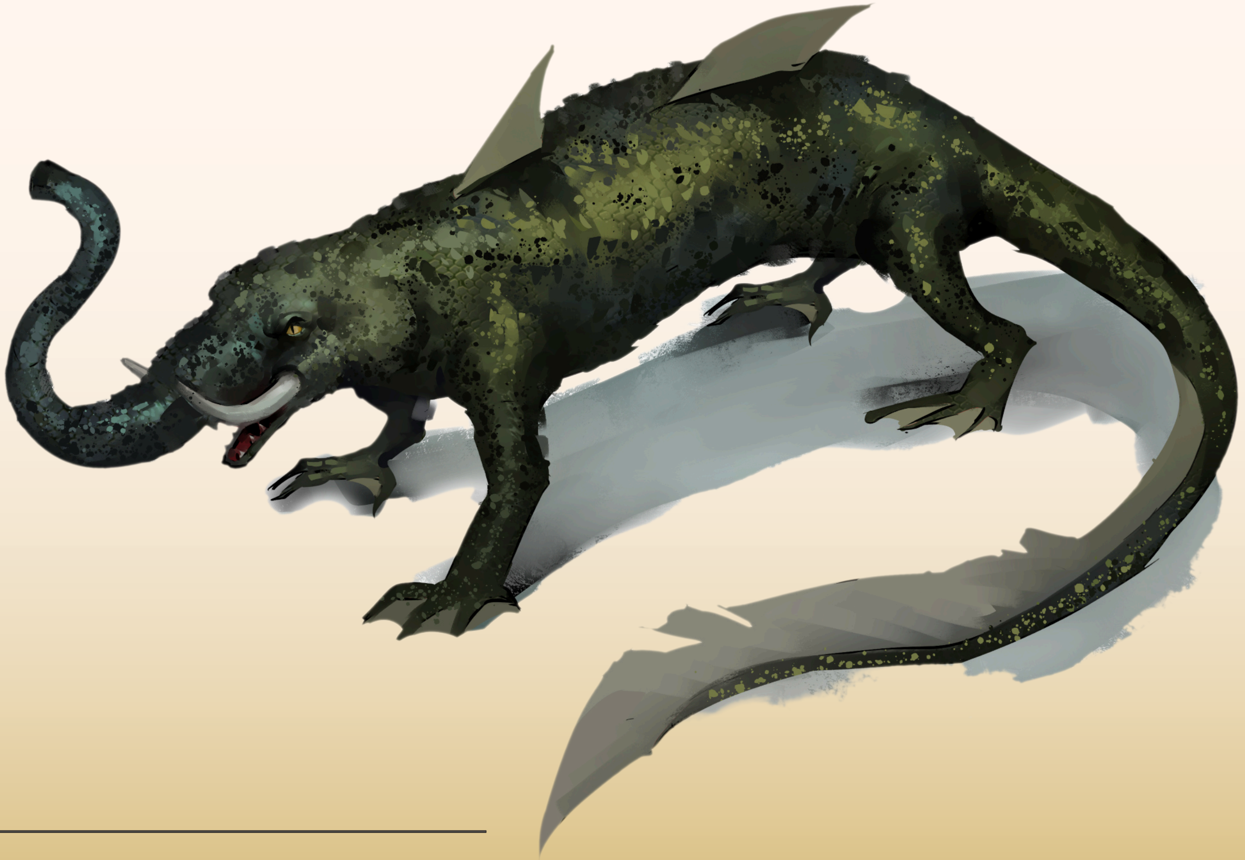
Hide (15 gp): Armor class 13. Hit points increased to 60.

Iron (100 gp): Armor class 15. Hit points increased to 80. Damage threshold increased to 10. Speed reduced by 20 feet.

Gold (500 gp): Armor class 13. Hit points increased to 70. Symbol for status and nobility.

Chariot Scythes: A long blade that is attached to the hub of both chariot wheels, slicing around it as the chariot moves. This weapon has devastating effects when charging into a group of enemies.

When a chariot equipped with scythes travels in a straight line for 20 feet, all creatures within 5 feet of the chariot must make a DC 13 reflex saving throw or take 11 (3d6) piercing damage.



Makara by Dibyo Shree

CLOTHING

The majority of clothes in Devabhumi are made from cotton, due to the soil and climate of Devabhumi. These cotton garments can then be processed, dyed, and combined with other materials to make a variety of clothes.

The clothing of the people of Devabhumi varies according to location. Looser, more flowy clothes are preferred in humid climates. Tight headwraps and face covers are common in the arid deserts. The styles and colors are all as diverse as the people are. Listed below are the most common garments seen in Devabhumi.

Antariya: A long cloth that is folded around the legs and tucked into itself to cover the lower body, resembling loose pants. These are usually worn by men and women during rituals and worship. Cost: 1 sp. Bulk –

Dupatta: A long scarf that is worn by women in most parts of Devabhumi that completes their outfit. It can cover the head, the neck, shoulders, or other parts of the body depending on style. Cost: 1 sp. Bulk –

Gajra: A garland of jasmine and rose flowers that is usually worn in the hair of women during feasts, festivals, and special occasions. Cost: 2 cp. Bulk –

Kaupinam: A cotton loincloth that is usually worn by wrestlers when sparring in the akhada. This clothing signifies asceticism, as the god Shiva is depicted wearing a kaupinam. Cost: 2 cp. Bulk –

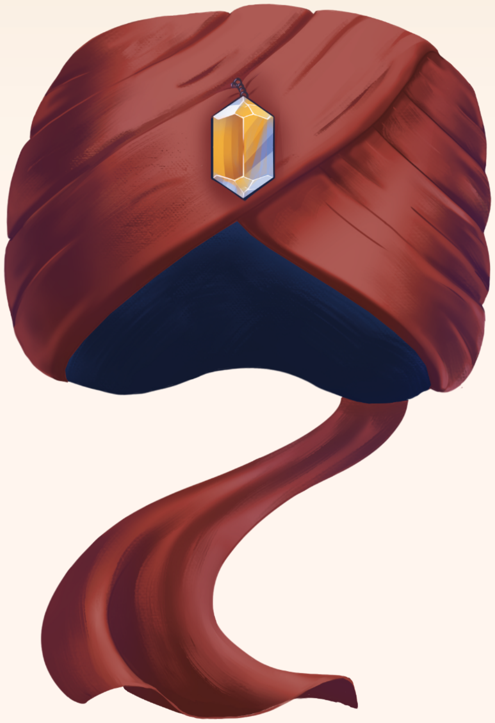
Kurta: A long cotton tunic that reaches the knees. This clothing is common in the north and is worn by both men and women. Cost: 5 sp. Bulk –

Lungi: A single plain or checkered cotton garment that is tied around the waist and hangs loosely over the legs. This is worn primarily by men in the South due to its loose and nonrestrictive fit. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk –

Pashmina: An expensive shawl made from the wool of the Pashmina goat. The material is incredibly soft, yet it keeps the wearer warm for long periods of time. This shawl is popular in the far north with people who dwell in the Aakashparvat Mountains. Cost: 50 gp. Bulk –

Pagri: A single piece of cloth that is tied around the head to form a turban. These turbans come in various colors, shapes, and styles. Pagris worn by people of the desert tend to be tall and loosely wrapped, while those worn by people in the east tend to be minimally wrapped and resemble a veil. Cost: 2 sp. Bulk –

Sari: A long dress usually worn by women that extends from the neck to the ankles, with hundreds of regional variations of style. This dress comes in all colors, may be decorated with jewels, and can be worn with all kinds of shawls and veils. Cost: 5 sp. Bulk –



Pagri by Jogn Brissenden

MUNDANE ITEMS

The people of Devabhumi carry with them a variety of trinkets, charms, and useful tools to aid them in their daily lives. Listed below are common mundane items that one may find.

Bansuri: A simple bamboo flute that is commonly used by shepherds and cowherds to call their animals. This flute produces a melodious sound that resembles wind blowing through thickets of trees. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk: L

Chandan: A type of fragrant sandalwood that can be used for a variety of purposes. These include carving statues of gods, adorning oneself with the fragrant, and burning the wood during religious rituals. Cost: 1 gp. Bulk: –

Dyes: A collection of saffron, turmeric and indigo dyes that can be used to stain cotton clothing, hair, and ornaments a certain color Cost: 10 gp. Bulk: –

Henna Paste: A paste consisting of ground up henna leaves that is then applied on the body as a temporary tattoo. The art of tattooing henna is known as Mehndi. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk –

Kohl: A fine black powder derived from minerals that is used as eyeliner to adorn oneself, but is also used to ward children from evil and to keep the eyes cool in the sun. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk –

Kumkum: A combination of turmeric and slaked lime, leading to a rich red powder. This powder is then combined with water to adorn the body with various marks and symbols. Worshipers of Shiva apply three horizontal marks to their forehead, whereas worshipers of Vishnu apply a U-shaped mark with a dot in the middle. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk –

Lota: A clay or copper pot that is used to store water and keep it cool throughout the day. Cost: 2 cp. Bulk: L

Mala: A set of wooden beads that are used for religious purposes. A mala usually has 108 beads. Cost: 2 cp. Bulk –

Paan: Betel nut and jaggery wrapped in leaves that are chewed to produce a relaxing effect on the mind. Regularly chewing Paan discolors one's teeth with a dark red color. It is customary to offer Paan to one's guests. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk –

Paduka: Wooden sandals that are worn by priests, sages, and followers of ahimsa (non-violence). These sandals are specifically designed to avoid trampling on insects and small creatures while walking. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk: L

Rudraksha: A necklace made from rare dried fruits that are considered holy to Shiva. This necklace is worn by devotees, priests, and travelers embarking on a difficult journey. A real Rudraksha is quite valuable, but there are plenty of inauthentic necklaces circulating in the markets. Cost: 25 gp. Bulk: –

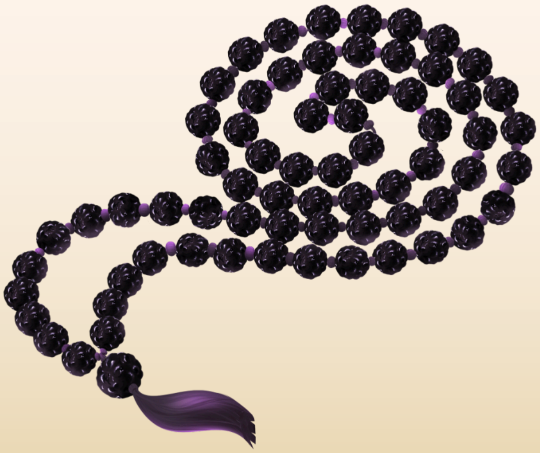
Sarangi: A stringed instrument carved from wood and can be played with a bow or by hand. The instrument produces a somber melody that resembles crying. Cost: 2 sp. Bulk: 1

Spices (common): These spices include turmeric, cumin seeds, cinnamon, and other common spices that are used in food, teas, and herbal medicine. Cost: 5 sp. Bulk: 1

Spices (rare): These spices include saffron, cardamom, and other rare spices that are used in food, teas, and herbal medicine. Cost: 5 gp. Bulk: 1

Tabla: A set of twin hand drums made from animal hide. The bayan is the larger of the two, producing a deep booming sound when struck. The dayan is the smaller drum, producing sharper and melodious sounds. Cost: 5 sp. Bulk: 1

Varmaala: A garland of colorful flowers that is placed around the necks of important figures. A varmaala may be placed on the statue of a god, a groom right before a wedding, or a Raja arriving home after a war. Cost: 5 cp. Bulk: –



Rudrakdha by Jogn Brissenden

WEAPONS & ARMOR

The diversity of people in Devabhumi has allowed the culture of different nations and tribes to flourish. As a result, people in different parts of the land have unique weapons and armor whose style and function is localized to their land. For example, the Talvar of northern Devabhumi is a curved sword that is commonly seen in cities across the north, whereas in the south, the short broad sword Pichangatti is used.

Listed below are the various arms and armor present in Devabhumi. Note that in general, most weapons from Core Rulebook can be used in the world of Devabhumi, although they may be rare.

SIMPLE MELEE WEAPONS

Aruval. A short sickle with a sharp hook near the end. This weapon is popular in the south and originated among farmers and peasantry who kept their blades sharp to protect themselves from bandits.

Cost: 2 sp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Knife. Properties: Agile, Finesse.

Ayuddha Katti. This unusual sword also developed amongst rice farmers in the south, who used it to cut through dense undergrowth.

Cost: 2 sp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Sword. Properties: Sweep.

Bichuwa. This dagger has an s-shaped curve to it, resembling the stinger of a scorpion. It is used all across Devabhumi, famed for its distinct look and easiness to conceal.

Cost: 1 gp. Damage: 1d4 piercing. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Knife. Properties: Agile, Finesse.

Dao. This eastern sword has a unique rectangular shape, which makes it useful for digging as well as warfare. It is used as a utility tool by villagers, as it can dig earth, chop wood, and provide protection from bandits or wild animals.

Cost: 1 gp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Sword. Properties: special (functions as an axe and shovel).

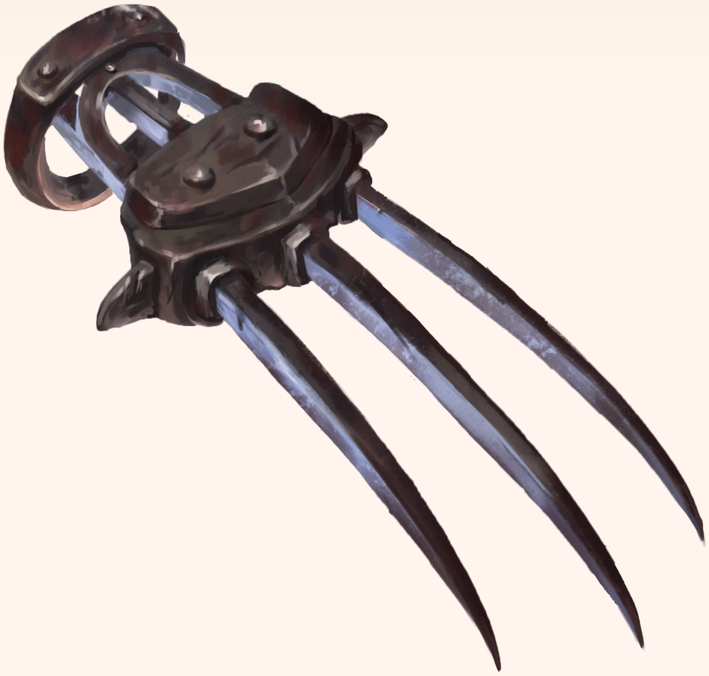
Valari. A thrown club made from bone or wood with tipped iron spikes, this weapon initially developed in the south as a means of hunting. However, the ease and versatility of the Valari made it a fine weapon of war.

Cost: 5 cp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Club. Properties: Thrown 20 ft.

SIMPLE RANGED WEAPONS

Gulel. A simple sling consisting of two thin ropes with a pocket in the middle to hold stone bullets. This weapon can be surprisingly devastating in an experienced hand.

Cost: 5 cp. Damage: 1d6 bludgeoning. Range: 50 ft. Reload: 1. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Sling. Properties: Propulsive.


Bagh Nakha by John Ric Detoon

MARTIAL MELEE WEAPONS

Bagha Nakha. The term Bagha Nakha means “tiger’s claw,” as this weapon resembles the claws of a great cat. It is held in the fist and has 3 sharp blades that emerge from between the fingers. This weapon is associated with assassins, as it is commonly wielded with the Bichuwa dagger.

Cost: 1 gp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Knife. Properties: Agile, Deadly d6, Finesse, Versatile P.

Baalam. A spear with a barbed steel or iron tip. This weapon is very efficient against moving targets and is a staple among infantry.

Cost: 2 sp. Damage: 1d8 piercing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Spear. Properties: Reach, Thrown 20 ft.

Dandpatta. This northern sword is unique in that its hilt takes the form of a steel gauntlet, which protects the hand and wrists. A crossgrip inside the gauntlet is held to wield the sword.

Cost: 1 gp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Sword. Properties: Parry.

Gada: The weapon of choice of wrestlers, the gada is a large two-handed mace with a sharp point at its tip. It is also venerated as a holy symbol of Hanuman and commonly wielded by clerics and paladins.

Cost: 5 gp. Damage: 1d10 bludgeoning. Bulk: 2. Hands: 2. Group: Club. Properties: Forceful, Shove.

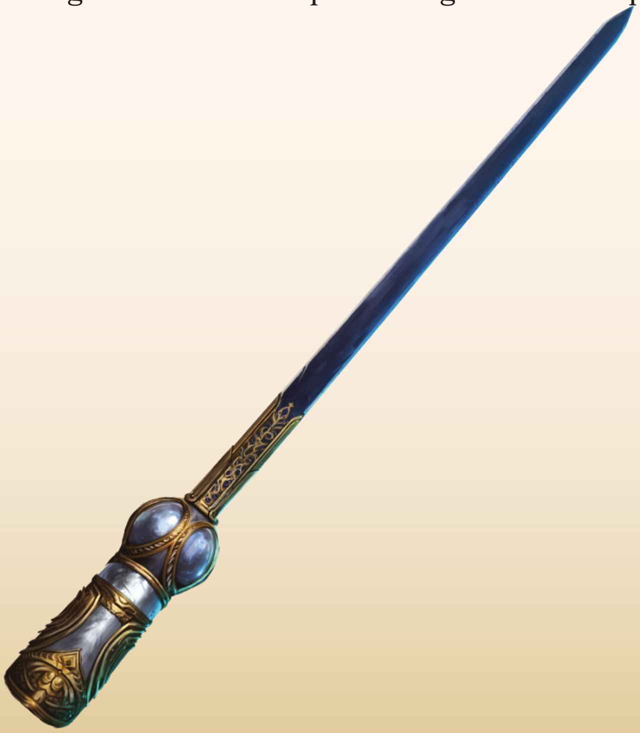
Hengdan: This is a sleek and well-crafted sword that is popular in the east. It is used by high-ranking rajas and ranis, as well as ceremonially during important events.

Cost: 2 gp. Damage: 1d8 slashing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Sword. Properties: Two-Hand d10.

Katar: This is a push-dagger with a t-shaped handle designed with covert assassination in mind. The wide but thin blade allows the knife to easily slip between the ribs and cause serious damage. It is another preferred weapon of assassins, rogues, and thugs.

Cost: 5 sp. Damage: 1d4 piercing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Knife. Properties: Agile, Finesse, Backstabber.

Khanda: A northern weapon that is a heavy straight sword with a plated edge and a sharp edge. This sword is often used as a strength-training weight for novice soldiers. The name Khanda means to split, or to destroy.



Dandpatta by John Ric Detoon

Cost: 4 gp. Damage: 1d10 slashing. Bulk: 2. Hands: 2. Group: Sword. Properties: Backswing, Sweep

Talvar: A light curved sabre from the north that is designed to be used on horseback and chariots.

Cost: 5 gp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Sword. Properties: Forceful, Sweep

Trishula: A three-pronged trident that is often associated with Shiva and his followers. A trishula may be adorned with a small drum called the Damaru, which makes a rattling noise when the trishula is thrown.

Cost: 1 gp. Damage: 1d8 piercing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Spear. Properties: Disarm, Thrown 20 ft.

Urumi: This weapon consists of a solid hilt attached to a handful of flexible sharp steel blades. It resembles a whip but requires finesse rather than strength to wield.

When not in use, it is worn around the waist as a belt. The Urumi is popular in the southern martial art known as Kalaripayattu.

Cost: 3 gp. Damage: 1d6 slashing. Bulk: 1. Hands: 1. Group: Club. Properties: Disarm, Finesse, Forceful, Reach.

Martial Ranged Weapons

Warfare in Devabhumi is predominantly fought at a range. Archers with thrown spears, slings, and bows dominate the battlefield, encircling each other with horses and chariots and fighting at melee only if needed. Archery is prominent especially among the nobility, who fight with longbows and ranged spells.

Dhanush Baan: A tall longbow made from bamboo or wood, notable for its exceptional range and power. The bottom end of the bow is held against the foot to provide stability when aiming.

Cost: 10 gp. Damage: 1d10 piercing. Range: 100 ft. Reload: 0. Bulk: 2. Hands: 1+. Group: Bow. Properties: Propulsive.

Chakra. The chakra is a difficult weapon to master, as it is viewed as a divine weapon wielded by Vishnu. It is a rotating disc with sharp edges that is thrown at an opponent. Unlike other ranged weapons, the chakra has the ability to curve in an arc and ignore cover.

Cost: 5 gp. Damage: 1d4 slashing. Range: 30 ft. Reload: – Bulk: L. Hands: 1. Group: Dart. Properties: Agile, Thrown.

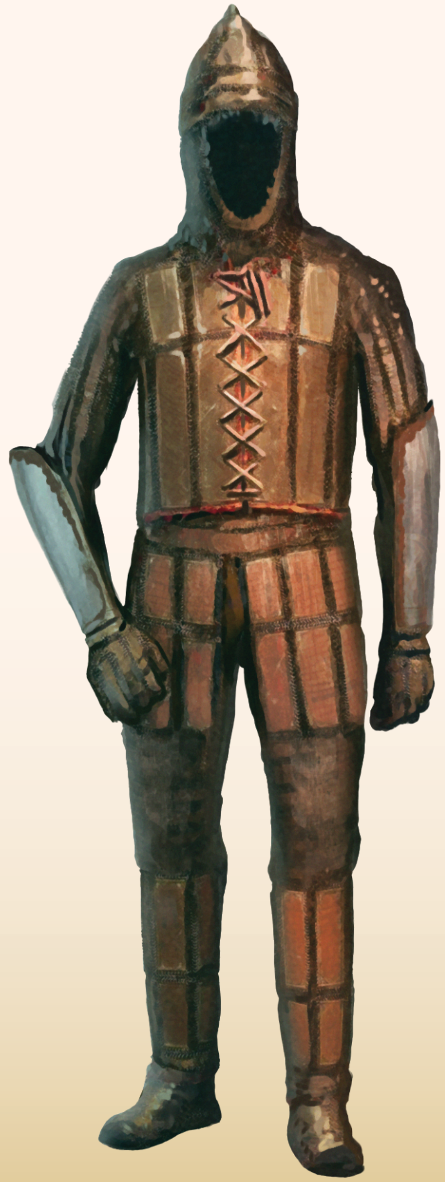
ARMOR

Ironworking and steel technology has advanced greatly in Devabhumi, aided by magic and the gods, allowing unique and powerful armor to be available to those willing to pay the price.

Some choose to wear light pelts made from rhinoceros or elephant hide, while others may clad themselves in heavy suits of scales and plates. Armor in Devabhumi comes in a variety of shapes and forms.

SHIELDS

Dhal. This circular shield is made from hide or steel and is slightly curved inwards to deflect projectiles. The shield may be decorated with familial symbols or icons of the gods. Wearing a Dhal increases your armor class by 2. You can only benefit from one shield at a time.



Chilta Hazar Nakh by John Ric Detoon

Cost: 2 gp. AC Bonus: +2. Bulk: 1. Hardness: 3. HP (BT): 14 (7).

Vadda Chakkar (Sunwheel). This unique item consists of a dozen wooden balls connected by woven threads in a circular fashion. When spun, it serves the function of deflecting any ranged projectiles in a 5 foot radius. However, it requires both hands to wield.

This item is used often in armies, where one soldier has the sole job of spinning the Vadda Chakkar to protect the surrounding soldiers from ranged projectiles.

Cost: 5 gp. AC Bonus: +4 against projectiles. Bulk: 1. Hardness: 3. HP (BT): 20 (10).

LIGHT ARMOR

Khaal. This is a special pelt made from tiger skin that can be worn over other types of armor. It does not provide any added protection, but it signifies status and distinction in battle.

Cost: 10 gp. Bulk: L.

Saabar. A light hide armor of either deer, elephant or rhinoceros skin. This armor is popular among mercenaries.

Cost: 2 gp. AC Bonus: +2. Dex Cap: +3. Check Penalty: -1. Strength: 10. Bulk: 1. Group: Leather. Properties: Flexible.

MEDIUM ARMOR

Drapi. Armor consisting of small steel scales arranged in the pattern of fish scales. This armor protects the chest and abdomen, and is usually multicolored.

Cost: 4 gp. AC Bonus: +2. Dex Cap: +2. Check Penalty: -2. Speed: -5 ft. Strength: 14. Bulk: 2. Group: Composite.

Kavacha. A steel breastplate that covers the chest and abdomen. This piece of armor is difficult to craft and is a sign of status among its wearers.

Cost: 10 gp. AC Bonus: +4. Dex Cap: +3. Check Penalty: -2. Speed: -5 ft. Strength: 16. Bulk: 2. Group: Plate.

Heavy Armor

Varman. A coat of banded plates that covers the wearer from the shoulder to the hips. These banded plates are connected by a wire, allowing for a snug yet comfortable fit.

Cost: 20 gp. AC Bonus: +5. Dex Cap: +1. Check Penalty: -3. Speed: -10 ft. Strength: 16. Bulk: 3. Group: Plate.

Chilta Hazar Nakh. "A Coat of Thousand Nails," this armor was popularized by the Zhav nomads. It consists of brigantine interweaved with plate and chain. It is the heaviest armor available in Devabhumi, and is common among royal bodyguards and elite soldiers.

Cost: 40 gp. AC Bonus: +6. Dex Cap: +0. Check Penalty: -3. Speed: -10 ft. Strength: 18. Bulk: 4. Group: Plate. Properties: Bulwark.

Magic Items

Anatavijaya. Rare, Level 6. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

Activate: ◆ (Manipulate). Frequency: Once per day.

This conch shell is of a pearly white color, decorated with scenes of intense battle. It is the conch shell used by the legendary King Yudhistira, the oldest of the Pandava Dynasty, during the Mahabharata war. You may blow this conch shell, which thunders powerfully. The following effects occur.

- All allies within 60 feet who can hear the conch gain a +4 status bonus to their initiative rolls.
- Each ally within 60 feet who can hear the conch regains Hit Points equal to 1d8 + your Wisdom modifier.
- All enemies within 60 feet who can hear the conch must attempt a Will save against your Class or Spell DC. On a failure, the creature is Frightened 1. The creature can attempt a new Will save at the end of each of its turns to reduce the frightened condition by 1. On a success, the creature is unaffected.

Amrita. Rare. Level 18. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L. Consumable.

Activate: ◆ (Manipulate).

A flask of heavenly nectar that is known for its powerful immortality-bestowing effect. The Devas and Asuras once fought a war over a large quantity of Amrita. The Devas who won regularly drink the Amrita to stay immortal.

You gain the following benefits for 24 hours:

You regain 1d10 Hit Points at the start of each of your turns (every 6 seconds), for a total of 60 Hit Points per minute. This regeneration can't restore Hit Points lost from attacks by an Astra or similar divine weapons.

While under the effects of this potion, you cannot be killed by any mundane or magical means, except for damage dealt by an Astra. You still take damage normally, but death only occurs if slain by such a weapon.

Anklet of a Gandharva. Uncommon, Level 6. Usage: Worn. Bulk: –

Activate: ◆◆◆ (Manipulate, sustain for 10 minutes). Frequency: Once per day.

This gold anklet was worn by a gandharva, a celestial dancer. When worn, it grants the gracefulness and nimble movements of the celestial dancers to the wearer. Each day, you can perform one of these dances that last ten minutes:

Bhangra: An energetic dance that is popular among farmers and the peasantry during celebrations. All non-hostile creatures who observe this dance feel a powerful urge to dance. They must succeed a DC 20 Will saving throw or dance along for the next minute.

Bharatnatyam: An elegant, refining dance that retells the story of a god or hero as part of the performance. All creatures who observe this dance are healed by 7 (2d4+2) hit points.

Ghoomar: A dance popular in the northwest that involves spinning and twirling of dizzying efforts. All creatures who observe this dance must succeed a DC 20 Fortitude saving throw or have their movement speed halved for 1 minute.

Tandav: An imitation of lord Shiva's famous dance of death, with fast movements and vigorous poses. All creatures who observe this dance gain a +1 status bonus to all damage rolls for the next hour.

Agni Ratha. Rare. Level 18. Usage: Vehicle.

Activate: ◆◆◆ (envision). Frequency: Once per day.

This charred brown chariot is reinforced with bronze and adorned with motifs of a swift blaze. Its spokes are tall and powerful, with the center adorned with a bronze relief carving of Agni, the fire god. When the rider steps upon this chariot, it suddenly combusts into bright red flames. The rider is not hurt, however, and the fire only seems to magnify their character.

This chariot was granted to a mortal by Agni as a gift for pleasing the god. It bears a divine quality to it and has been passed from warrior to warrior through the ages.

The chariot can be activated once per day, and it lasts for 10 minutes or until dismounted.

Aura of Fear: The burning flames, the dense smoke, and the fiery gallop of your horses all create an aura of fear around you. Up to six creatures of your choice that can see you must attemmpt a Will save against your Class DC. On a failure, the creature is Frightened 1 for 1 minute. They can attempt a new Will save at the end of each of their turns to reduce the frightened condition by 1.

Fiery Attacks: As your weapons swing through the flames, it magically catches on fire. All of your weapon attacks deal an additional 1d6 fire damage. This effect is applied to all strikes made while on the chariot.

Chandani Embroidery. Uncommon. Level 5. Usage: Applied to Clothing. Bulk: –

The silvery threads of this embroidery glimmer like moonlight, shining especially bright at nighttime. This magical stitching can be embroidered on one piece of clothing of your choice. While wearing the embroidered clothing, you gain the following benefits:

- Your Charisma score increases by one.
- You gain darkvision.

Chariot Figurine. Uncommon, Level 3. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

Activate: ◆ (Manipulate). Frequency: Once per day.

This small stone figurine resembles a chariot, pulled by four athletic steeds. This figurine is small enough to fit in a bag or pocket. As an action, you can speak the command word and throw the figurine on the ground within 60 feet of you. The figurine transforms into a life-sized chariot with four Kathiawari horses attached to it. The chariot reverts back to the figurine after 8 hours. If the chariot is destroyed or all four horses are killed, the chariot reverts back to the figurine.

Conchshell of Kurukshetra. Rare, Level 10. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

Activate: ◆◆◆ (Manipulate). Frequency: Once per day.

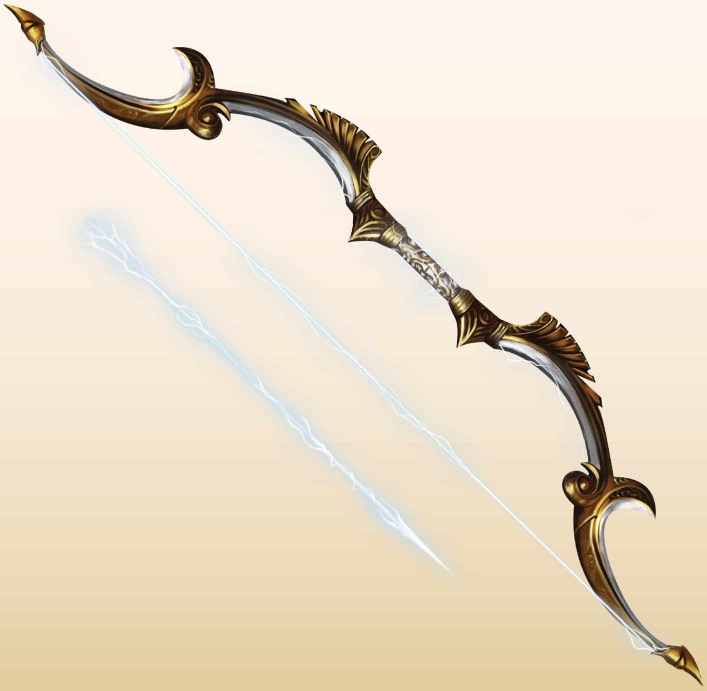
This conchshell is twice the size of a normal one. A small crack climbs up halfway from the mouth. Intricate carvings and exotic materials indicate the ancient design of this conch shell. Upon use, the conchshell glows an eerie yellow. A grim realization dawns on you that this conchshell was used in the Mahabharata.

Once per day, you may blow on the conchshell and summon 1d6+1 **bhootas** (see Monsters) from the Mahabharata war. They act on their own initiative, and attack any creature you point to. The bhootas disappear after 1 hour.

Curse: When you use the conchshell, there is a 50% chance that the bhootas are hostile to you. Even if you do not blow on the conchshell, it will spawn 1d6+1 bhootas within 30 feet of you at a random point in the day.

Gandiva. Dhanush Baan. Unique, Level 20. Usage: Held in 2 hands. Bulk: 1. This longbow possesses a noticeably celestial quality, carved from white wood with 108 fine silver strings to hold it together. A low hum emanates from the bow, hinting to its hidden power.

Gandiva was created by Brahma for the sole purpose of protecting Dharma. It was then passed on to different gods, who wielded it for



Gandiva by John Ric Detoon

centuries. Eventually, it made its way into the hands of Arjuna, the famous archer in the Mahabharata.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Asruta: Gandiva produces its own arrows when it is drawn. As you draw back the bow, you can speak the word "Agni," "Bijli," or "Surya" and change the damage type to fire, electricity, or vitality, respectively.

Samyak: You may reroll an attack roll and must take the second result. You can use this feature three times per day.

Meghagarjana: ◆◆ When you fire an arrow with Gandiva, the strings let out a deep thundering sound. You may choose to amplify this sound to cause fear around you. Up to six creatures of your choice that can hear you must succeed on Will saving throw against your Class DC. On a failure, they are frightened 2 for 1 minute. They can repeat this saving throw at the end of their turns, ending their fear on a success. You may use this feature once per day.

Guru's Upanaya. Rare, Level 3. Usage: Worn Item. Bulk: –. Evolving Magic Item.

This sacred thread was once worn by a wise sage that accumulated decades of experience, knowledge, and proficiency. Upon wearing this thread, you slowly gain the benefits of accumulated knowledge collected by this sage.

This magic item evolves with you, unlocking new effects as milestones are reached. The milestones depend upon your experience, which is represented by level.

- 3: You become trained in an additional skill of your choice
- 6: You regain an expended spell slot of 2nd level or lower. You may use this feature once per day.
- 9: Your wisdom score increases by one.
- 12: You regain an expended spell slot of 3rd level or lower. You may use this feature once per day.
- 15: Your wisdom score increases again by 1. You become trained in two additional skills of your choice.

Jewel of a Naga. Uncommon, Level 6. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

Activate: ◆ (Command).

This jewel either fell off a Naga or was forcefully pried from its body. However, it still retains its luster. When the command word "Roshni" is spoken, the jewel gives off 30 feet of bright light and another 30 feet of dim light.

As two actions, ◆◆ you may activate this jewel to attempt to blind a creature that can see the jewel. It must succeed a Fortitude saving throw against your Class DC or be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Mask of Bhairava. Uncommon, Level 7. Usage: Worn. Bulk: L. Requires Investment.

A fearsome mask with three eyes that bulge from its crimson, volcanic face. This mask imitates the visage of Bhairava, a frightening avatar of Shiva. This mask grants those worthy to wear it a dash of the clarity and ferocity of Bhairava. While wearing this mask, you gain the following effects:

- You gain a +2 item bonus to Intimidation checks.
- You gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against effects that would charm or frighten you.
- Once per day, you can cast the Fear spell as a 3rd-level spell. Charisma is your spellcasting ability modifier for this spell.

Kalachakra. Unique, Level 16. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: 1.

This golden chakra features many sharp razors along its edge like the teeth of a predator, and is adorned with silvery runes on its surface. The word "Kalachakra" means the Wheel of Time.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Avarodhan: As a reaction, ⤾ you may choose to intercept a ranged projectile that you can see. Make a weapon attack. If the number equals or succeeds the weapon attack of the ranged projectile, then the projectile misses. You may only do this before knowing whether the ranged projectile hits or misses. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency modifier, regaining all uses on a long rest.

Kala-Samdadhati: At the beginning of combat, you can choose to swap the initiative between two creatures of your choice that you can see. You can also use this feature on yourself.

Ruk: On a critical hit, you reduce the speed of the affected creature to 0 until the end of its next turn.

Kundalini. Uncommon, Level 10. Usage: Held in 1 hand (staff). Bulk: L.

This curved wooden staff is adorned with silver swirls and circular designs. This staff embodies the divine energy known as Shakti, which is believed to be the counterpart of Shiva.

You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this staff. Your attacks deal an additional 1d4 electricity damage. A creature you critically hit with this weapon is paralyzed until the start of their next turn.

Manisha. Rare, Level 15. Usage: Held in 1 hand (Khanda). Bulk: 1.

This Khanda has a light and well-balanced blade, decorated with jewels on its hilt. The word Manisha means wisdom, and this sword was created by a powerful sage to represent wisdom cutting through the web of darkness and ignorance.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Maya-Vijeyta: This sword protects you from illusion and the veil of Maya. As a result, you are immune to being blinded or deafened, and you have advantage on all saving throws made against illusion magic.

Samvitti: This sword opens your eyes into realms beyond the material. You are able to see 60 feet into the ethereal plane.

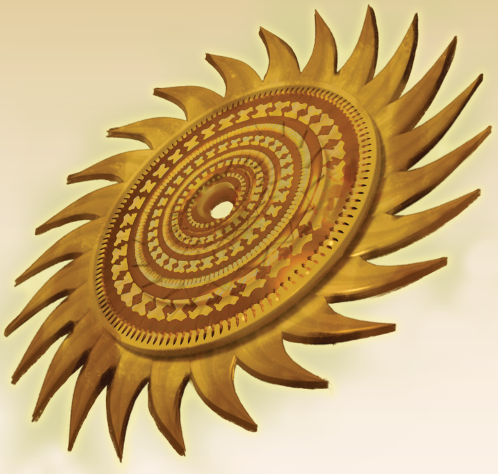
Bhedak: You gain a +5 bonus to your perception.

Nagini's Venom. Rare, Level 15. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

This vial holds a foul and potent extract of venom from a powerful sea serpent. It has 10 uses.

As an action, ◆ you may expend a use to coat one weapon or three pieces of ammunition with this venom. When applied, the weapon retains its venom for one minute.

When a creature is hit by a weapon or ammunition coated with this venom, it must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw (DC 23) or suffer one of the following effects of your choice below.



Kalachakra by John Ric Detoon

- The creature takes 4d6 poison damage.
- The creature takes 1d4 poison damage at the start of its turns for one minute.
- The creature is paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

Pavan Paan. Uncommon, Level 5. Consumable. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

This chewable betelnut is blessed by the wind god. When you consume it, your lungs fill with the power of the wind. You can cast Wall of Wind. Your spellcasting ability modifier for this spell is Wisdom.

Rudraksha. Rare, Level 10. Usage: Worn. Bulk:– Requires investment.

Activate: ◆ (Command). Frequency: Once per day.

A blessed necklace of dried fruits that are sacred to Shiva. These fruits are incredibly rare and compiling them into a Rudraksha necklace requires years of devotion. Wearing this necklace bestows the wearer with Shiva's protection.

This necklace has 1 charge, which regenerates at dawn. When you use a charge, choose one effect from the list below:

- You regain 5d4 + 8 hit points.
- You gain resistance 10 to a damage type (your choice from: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or poison) for one minute.

Sandals of Nonviolence. Unique, Level 3. Usage: Worn. Bulk:–. Requires Investment.

These sandals were worn by an ancient sage who preached strict non-violence. Pleased by the sage's reverence for life, the god Vishnu granted him these sandals, which would protect the sage as long as he did not raise his arms in violence against any living being. While wearing these sandals, you gain the following benefits:

- You can cast the Shield cantrip three times per day.
- You gain a +2 item bonus to Diplomacy checks.
- You gain the benefits of the Step action as a free action once per turn.

If you deal damage to any creature via a weapon attack, spell attack, or other feature, these benefits cease for 1d10 days.

Small Murti. Uncommon, Level 4. Usage: Worn. Bulk: L. Requires Investment.

This is a small statue of the particular Deva or Devi you worship that is carried for good luck. While attuned to this statue, you gain a +1 item bonus to all saving throws. Furthermore, an ability score of your choice increases by 1.

Manisha by John Ric Detoon

Stitching of the Tiger. Uncommon. Level 5. Usage: Applied to Clothing. Bulk: –

This embroidery consists of alternating orange and black stripes, with hints of gold hidden among the threads. This magical embroidery is imbued with the strength and cunning of a tiger, and can be attached to one piece of clothing of your choice. You gain the following effects when wearing the clothing:

- You gain a +2 item bonus to Stealth checks to Hide when in dim light or darkness.
- You gain a +1 item bonus to attack rolls and damage rolls with melee weapons.

Surya's Embroidery. Uncommon. Level 5. Usage: Applied to Clothing. Bulk: –

The radiant threads of this embroidery glow dimly like sunlight, altogether forming a pattern resembling the sun. This is enchanted embroidery of the sun god Surya that can be attached to a piece of clothing of your choice. You gain the following effects while wearing this embroidery:

- You gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against effects that would blind you.
- You gain resistance 5 to fire damage.

Teerpani Wand. Rare, Level 12. Usage: Held in 1 hand. Bulk: L.

This wand is a rather simple wooden rod imbued with bronze studs at regular intervals. This wand has three charges, which are replenished daily at dawn.

Activate: ◆ (manipulate).

Using one charge, you may turn any rock, boulder, or stone that weighs less than 200 lbs into a pool of fresh water. This pool remains indefinitely, until it dries up.

Activate: ⤾ trigger: you are targeted by a ranged projectile.

Using two charges, you may use your reaction to turn an incoming arrow or other ranged projectile into harmless drops of water.

Tufan-Vajra. Any melee weapon. Rare, Level 8. Usage: Held in 1 or 2 hands. Bulk: Varies.

This weapon is decorated with a series of thin irregular lines that intersect and branch off at random. When wielded, the lines give off a dim purple glow, resembling lightning. The weapon has three charges. It regains all charges at the start of each day.

Activate: ◆◆ (manipulate).

You can expend one charge to call forth magical rain upon a 15 foot radius that you can see. If there is a drought and there are no plants, the foliage will return to its full, vibrant, natural greenery. 1d4 + 2 *amla* plants, each containing 10 amlas that heal 1 hit point each appear in the foliage. If there is moderate to heavy foliage, the same amount of *amla* plants appear, and the foliage gets twice as overgrown as it was previously. You must be outdoors where the sky can be seen to use this feature.

Activate: ◆◆◆ (envision).

You can expend two charges to cast *Solid Fog* at any point within 120 feet. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability modifier for this spell.

Vayuratha. Unique. Level 20. Use: Vehicle (chariot). Requires Investment.

A silver chariot intricately decorated with reliefs sculptures of mighty wars taking place in the heavens. This chariot was once used by the god Indra during a war between devas and asuras. It was then passed down to a warrior in the Mahabharata war. After the war, the chariot disappeared, likely stolen by battlefield scavengers. Now, it has appeared once more, ready to bear its rider and serve it with divine powers.

Viyachara: When you step upon this chariot, ethereal reigns connect to six ghostly white horses, all adorned with esoteric symbols. This chariot gains a land speed of 80 feet and a flying speed of 60 feet. The mounts are ethereal and do not require food or water. They do not fatigue.

Sthavira: You cannot be knocked off the chariot through nonmagical means. You are immune to the grappled and restrained conditions while seated in the chariot. If you are knocked prone, you still remain in the chariot.

Kathina: This chariot cannot be destroyed. It has immunity to all damage types.

Vijaya. Dhanush Baan. Unique, Level 20. Usage: Held in 2 hands. Bulk: 1.

This longbow is made from a rich wood adorned with bronze tips. It bears a scent of auspicious sandalwood, like incense from the heavens above. The string is thick, and of a golden hue.

This longbow was created by Vishvakarma, the divine craftsman and blacksmith, as a favor for Indra. After wielding it against a war with asuras, the longbow made its way into the hands of the half-mortal Karna, son of the god Surya. After Karna was defeated by the legendary marksman Arjuna, the longbow was lost to time, being taken by scavengers and traded across hundreds of hands who were not worthy to wield it. This bow was created by the gods, for the gods, and therefore only a creature with divine blood can wield it.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Asruta: This bow produces its own arrows when drawn. When you hit a creature, the attack deals an additional 1d6 fire damage.

Avarana: As you fire this weapon, a blinding light emanates from the arrow. Up to 6 creatures of your choice must make a Constitution saving throw against your Class or Spell DC. On a failure, they are blinded until the end of their next turn. You may use this feature once per day.

Vibhajana: When you attack with this weapon, you may choose to split the arrow into 1d4 arrows, which may be directed towards different targets within range. Roll separate attack and damage rolls for each arrow. You may use this feature once per day.

Vrigodharam. Gada. Unique, Level 20. Usage: Held in 2 hands. Bulk: 2

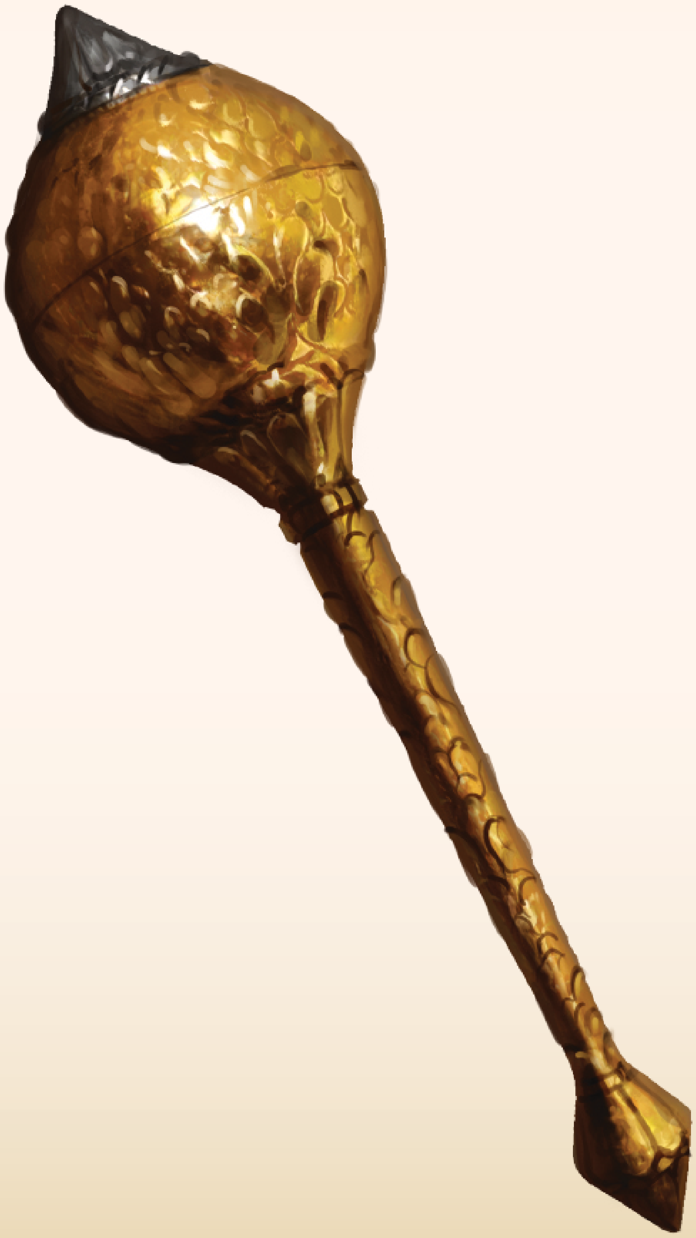
This Gada is quite heavy, being tempered with bronze and steel. A shiny golden exterior coats this weapon, not having lost its luster over time, and a steel spike adorns the tip. This Gada was granted to the hero Bheema as a boon from the gods before the Mahabharata commenced. The name Vrigodharam means “voracious eater,” as this blunt weapon has taken hundreds of lives through its history.

You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon. It has the following additional properties.

Bali: This Gada grants its wielder immense strength. While wielding this weapon, your strength score increases by one. Furthermore, you count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift.

Mahabala: Whenever you hit a creature that is Medium or smaller with Vrigodharam, it must succeed at a DC 12 + your Strength modifier Fortitude save or be knocked prone.

Ghataka: Your weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.



Vrigodharam by John Ric Detoon

Astras

Astras are divine weapons created by the gods with the intent of use only by the gods. However, as is the case with weapons capable of destroying the world, some of these items have fallen into the hands of mortals throughout history. The mortal who wields an Astra has the most to fear, as the gods do not take kindly to mortals using divine weapons for worldly needs.

Acquiring an Astra is no easy task. It usually requires dialogue with a god and convincing that god to grant you an Astra. This can occur through a boon, where a devotee is granted any wish by a pleased god. Once an Astra is acquired, it usually has a time period until it returns to its god. For example, a king who asks for an Astra to defeat an army of Asuras will have to surrender the Astra after the Asura army has been defeated. If the king refuses to surrender the Astra, then they invoke the wrath of all the gods upon them.

Unlike magic weapons, an Astra is not a physical weapon. Instead, it is a powerful, unseen spiritual force that can be activated at will. Each Astra has a specific mantra that must be chanted to activate it. This knowledge is highly guarded. When activated, the wielder can bestow the power of the Astra on any weapon or ammunition, bestowing it with the full power of the Astra.

An Astra can be used once per day. Even if one possesses multiple Astras, only one Astra can be used in a day. When one surrenders an Astra, they lose all memory of the mantra.

Listed below are all the Astras and the gods who possess them.

Agniastra

Agni, the lord of fire, wields this Astra. When used, its flames burn brighter and hotter than any regular fire. This Astra is capable of causing great destruction.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Agni

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Range 200 feet.

Duration Instantaneous.

A streak of fire emanates from your hand in a line that is 200 feet long and 10 feet wide, blazing through anything that is caught in its path. Any creature or object in its path takes 33 (6d10) fire damage and is caught on fire. A creature that is caught on fire and takes an additional 5 fire damage (1d10) at the start of each of its turns for 1 minute. The fire damage can only be extinguished by a Varunastra or similar magical means.

Brahmastra

This Astra is possessed by Brahma, and the knowledge of the mantra is only given out by Brahma. It has the capability of wiping out entire armies, settlements, and cities at once. This Astra can also counter other Astras.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Brahma

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Range As far as you can see; Area: 200-foot burst

Duration Instantaneous.

A cloud that is full of divine light flies like a storm towards the target. The cloud occupies the designated area and deals a cumulative 1,050 (100d20) fire damage to all the inhabitants in the area. The damage pool deals damage to the stronger creatures first. The cloud remains until the damage pool is exhausted or all living creatures in its radius are dead.

Alternatively, this Astra can be used to counter the effects of another Astra.

Cast ⤾ (Trigger: you see someone casting any Astra) Somatic, Verbal

Range As far as you can see

Duration Instantaneous.

You use this Astra to interrupt a creature in the process of using an Astra. You and the creature you're attempting to interrupt must make a Wisdom ability check. If your roll exceeds your opponent's, then the Astra is interrupted. If interrupted in this manner, the creature cannot use an Astra until the next day.

Brahmashira

This is the most powerful Astra and is guarded by Brahma with great secrecy. It has the capability to completely erase matter from existence.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Brahma

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Range As far as you can see

Duration Instantaneous.

A small, fiery spear flies towards the target of your choice, marking it for utter destruction. When this Astra is used, the sky becomes obscured by black clouds, and an ominous, fiery streak is seen in the air. The target initially engulfs in flames, then is instantaneously vaporized, leaving behind scorched remains.

Your target can include a creature, object, or location. The object can be as large or small as you wish, but you must be able to see it. This includes cities, fortresses, and mountains. Any life forms that dwell within these locations are destroyed. No plant or animal can grow in the destroyed location for ten years.

Indrastra

This Astra is used by Indra and takes the form of a lightning bolt when used. This Astra was used by many gods, heroes, and Asuras alike, to devastating effect.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Indra

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Range 1 mile; **Area** 50-foot burst

Duration Instantaneous.

You point your finger towards a point that you see, and hundreds of thunderbolts fly towards that point. Each creature within 50 feet of the point that you chose takes 55 (10d10) electricity damage.

Manavastra

This Astra is not currently possessed by any god, and its whereabouts are unknown. The Manavastra was used by the first human, Manu, to explore this world.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Brahma

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Range Self

Duration Instantaneous.

This Astra teleports you to a location that you have seen or heard that is in the current realm. You can also teleport to unknown locations that are adjacent to known locations. For example, you can teleport behind a mountain range to discover what is behind it.

Varunastra

This is the Astra of Varuna, lord of the ocean and the sea. When used, this Astra releases massive amounts of water, flooding the land.

Traditions: Divine

Deity: Varuna

Cast ◆◆◆ Somatic, Verbal

Area 100-foot cone.

Duration Instantaneous.

Your weapon sunders as large amounts of water is released and falls like a wave in a 100-foot cone. Each creature in the cone takes 45 (10d8) bludgeoning damage.

This Astra can also be used to counter the Agniastra.

Cast ⤾ (Trigger: you see someone casting an Agniastra) Somatic, Verbal

Range As far as you can see

Duration Instantaneous.

You use this Astra to interrupt a creature in the process of using an Agniastra. You and the creature you're attempting to interrupt must make a Wisdom ability check. If your roll exceeds your opponent's, then the Astra is interrupted. If interrupted in this manner, the creature cannot use an Astra until the next day.

Monsters

AIRAVATA

A three-headed elephant stands on a mountain surrounded by clouds. Its pristine ivory tusks are decorated with sparkling gold, and a garland of flowers adorns its head.

Airavata, the king of elephants, guards the entry into Svarga, the home of the gods. This watchful creature possesses great strength, but greater still is its mind. It possesses an intellect that exceeds even the most learned of sages. Foolish mortals who attempt to enter Svarga are crushed by this beast, and Asuras stray far from it.

When angered, this creature is capable of wreaking havoc on the land, breaking walls and palaces, causing earthquakes, and causing the clouds to dry up. Consoling this beast when angered is truly a task for heroes, one that the gods would reward.

Baadal-Shakti: Airavata possesses control of clouds, as it is able to create clouds and move them as it wishes. It is likewise able to dry up clouds, causing drought and famine. Some farmers have shrines to Airavata in their fields and offer bananas to ensure good rainfall.

Mount of the Gods: Airavata once served as a mount for the gods, and was especially loved by Indra. To prevent infighting over who possessed this wondrous animal, Indra assigned it a task of guarding the gates to Svarga.

AIRAVATA

Huge Celestial, Level 19

Perception +21; Low light vision

Languages Svarga, Celestial, *tongues*

Skills Athletics +19, Arcana +21, Religion +21

Str +8, **Dex** +0, **Con** +6, **Int** +7, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +0

AC 34; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +14, **Will** +21

HP 225, regeneration 15

Divine Bond (divine, once per day)**:** Airavata is connected to Svargaloka. Once per day, it can reroll one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, using the better result.

Speed: 30 feet

Melee ◆ gore +29 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+16 piercing

Melee ◆ stomp +29 (one prone creature), **Damage** 2d10+16 bludgeoning

Break the Lines: ◆◆ Airavata thunders forward 20 feet in a straight line, and all creatures within the line of movement must succeed on a DC 31 Reflex saving throw.

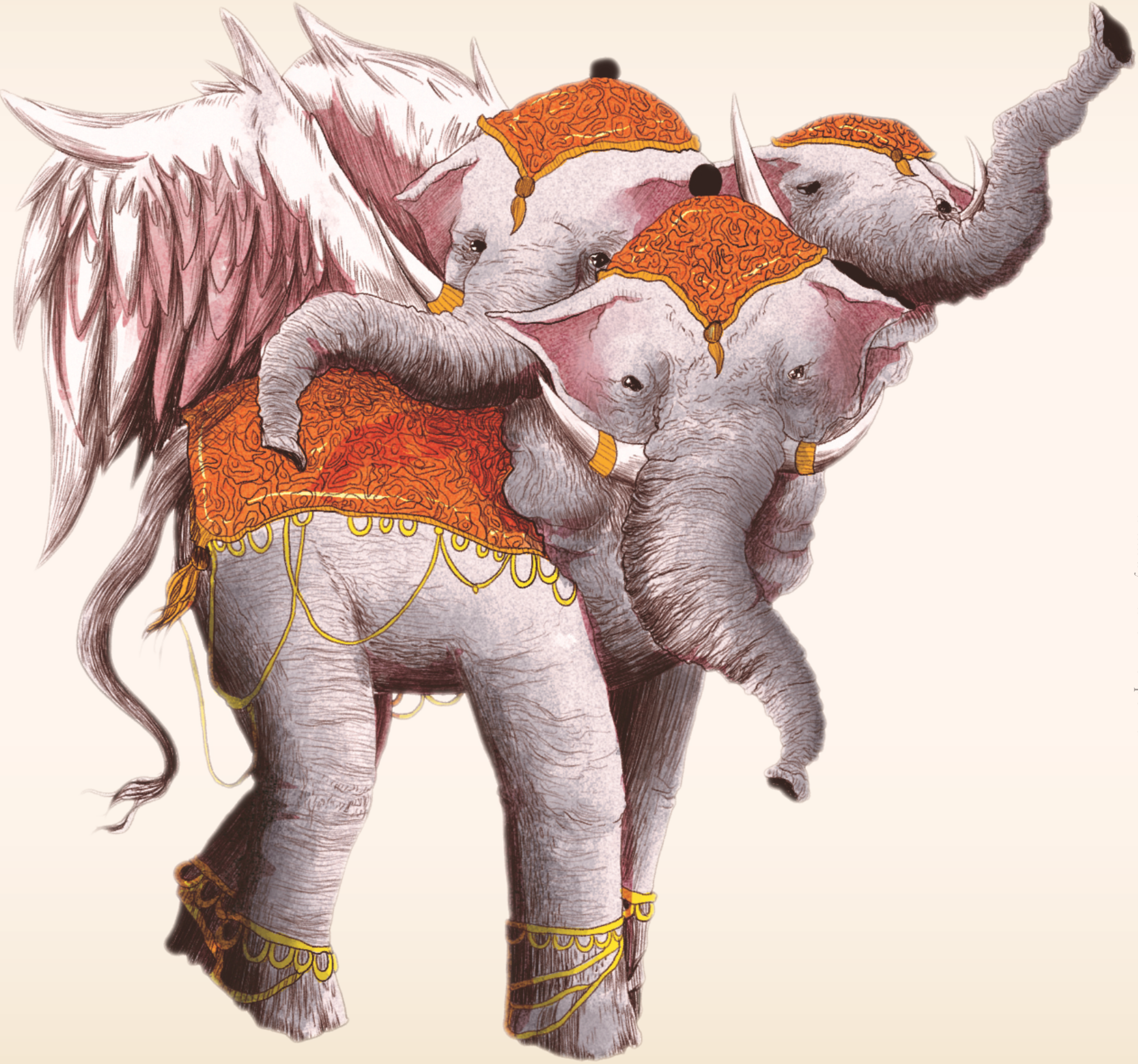
Critical Success: The creature is unaffected and gains a +2 bonus to reflex saves against this attack.

Success: The creature unaffected.

Failure: The creature is knocked prone and takes 1d12 bludgeoning damage.

Critical Failure: The creature is knocked prone and takes 2d12 bludgeoning damage.

Innate Divine Spells DC 31, +23 to hit. 8th *Punishing Winds*. 4th *Stormwind Flight*. 3rd *Lightning Bolt*.



Airavata by Marlon Felipe Ruiz

ASURAS

These fiendish beings were created to directly oppose the gods. According to legend, there once lived a woman named Diti, whose sons were killed by the god Indra. Nurturing hatred against the gods and seeking vengeance for her children, she convinced her husband, the powerful sage Kashyapa, to beget a son with her. This son would be capable of defeating the gods.

When Diti became pregnant, Indra was concerned with the potential threat to his heavenly kingdom. He entered Diti's womb and cut the child into 49 pieces. However, Indra was unable to kill the lifeform that dwelt in Diti's womb, and the 49 pieces transformed into 49 separate creatures. When Diti painfully gave birth, she saw a large race of fearsome, powerful beings standing before her.

Dark Nature: Asuras are masters of violence, deceit, and murder. They dwell in Patala, plotting to corrupt mortals and overthrow the gods. Although they have the capacity to reason like mortals, they lack a conscience. However, Asuras still maintain a sense of loyalty to each other, as they view each other as brothers and sisters.

Fearsome Appearance: Asuras take many forms and shapes, each distant and equally terrifying. They can have grey or blue skin, fangs, and thick matted hair and range between five and ten feet tall. Some subraces of asuras do not fit this description, however, and display their own set of frightful features. If an Asura is especially powerful, such as a **Rakshasha**, it will have multiple arms and heads.

Masters of Deceit: Although they possess an imposing frame with intimidating features, Asuras prefer to use lies and trickery when they can, often complemented with illusory magic.

There are many different types of Asuras, from the gigantic **Daityas** to the aberrant sea-dwelling **Nivatakavachas**. The different types of Asuras generally keep to themselves. But if someone manages to unite them, they are capable of conquering the earth as well as the heavens. The different types of Asuras are listed below.

ASURA

Medium Fiend, Level 3

Perception +5; darkvision.

Languages Patala, one additional language

Skills Deception +7, Society +7, Stealth +7
Str +2, **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +1

AC 17 (drapi), **Fort** +9, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

HP 50

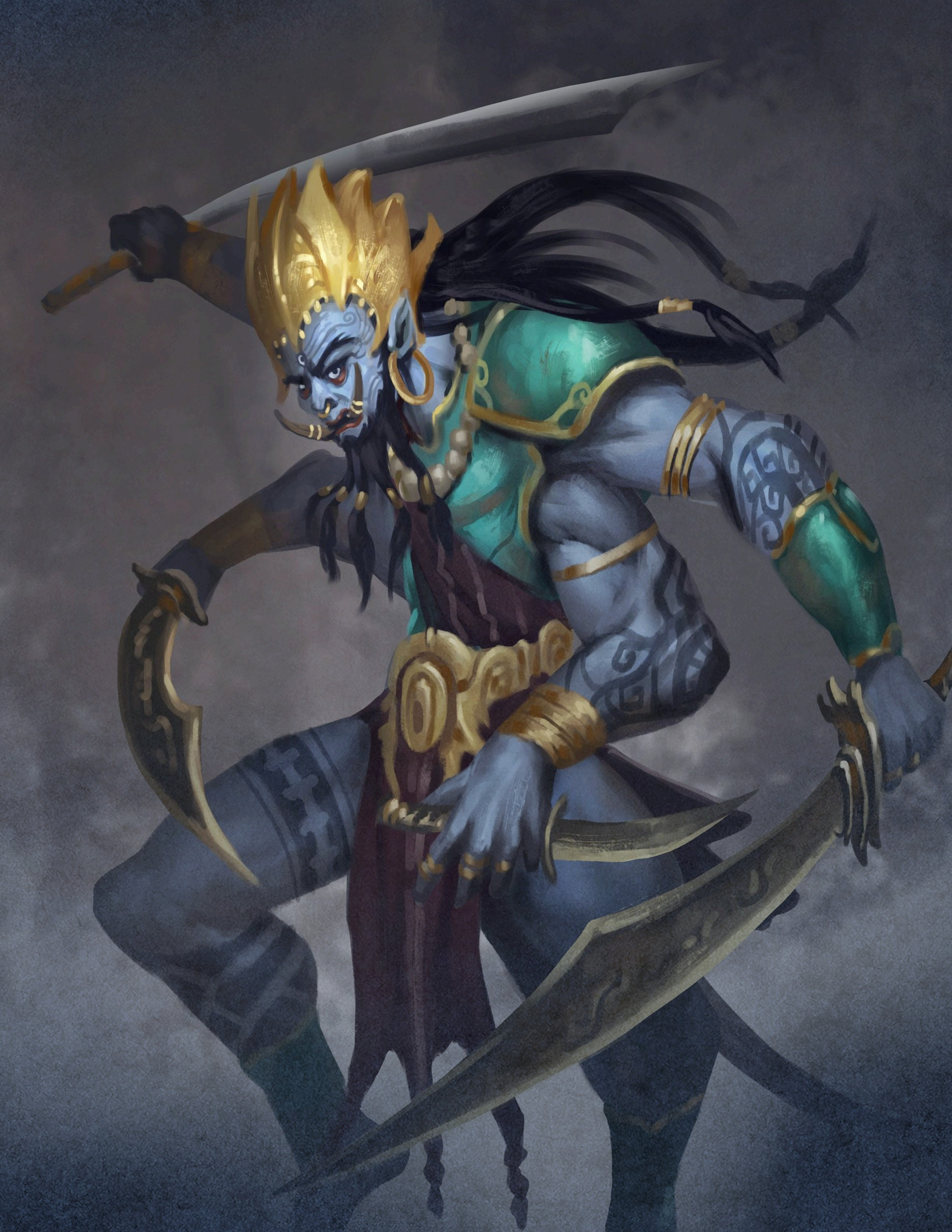
Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ Khanda +10, **Damage** 1d12+4 slashing

Frightening Visage ◆◆ All hostile creatures within 30 ft. that can see the Asura must make a DC 17 Will save or become Frightened 1 for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns to end it on a success. A successful save makes the creature immune to this effect for 24 hours.

Innate Spells (DC 18, +10 to hit) 2nd Blazing Bolt, Darkness. 1st Charm.

Asura by John Ric Detoon



DAITYAS

The most physically imposing of all the Asuras, these creatures resemble giants with multiple heads and arms. They stand well above ten feet tall, possess booming voices, and inspire fear around them. Amongst other Asuras, they typically lead and command others. Despite their menacing frame, they resemble humans more closely than other Asuras. They can grow long black hair, their faces are more human-like, and their teeth are more blunted. Some even consider them conventionally beautiful.

Due to their tyrannical nature and likeness to humans, daitya have often ruled over human kingdoms in the past, and still continue to rule over some settlements. The city of Kayadhu, for example, is ruled by a powerful daitya.

Prideful and Vain: Daityas are quite proud of their innate power and beauty. As a result, they take deep offense to any challenge to their status. To someone who is aware of this, it becomes quite easy to manipulate a daitya into thinking or feeling a certain way. Many daitya rules have been subtly controlled by human ministers in this way.

DAITYA

Large Fiend, Level 8

Perception +11; darkvision

Languages Patala, one additional language

Skills Deception +11, Society +11, Intimidation +11
Str +4, **Dex** +0, **Con** +3, **Int** +2, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

AC 24 (drapi), **Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10
HP 130

Attack of Opportunity ⤾

Speed 30 ft.
Melee ◆ Khanda +18 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d12+7 slashing

Frightening Visage ◆◆ All hostile creatures within 30 ft. that can see the Daitya must make a DC 17 Will save or become Frightened 1 for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns to end it on a success. A successful save makes the creature immune to this effect for 24 hours.

Wide Swing ◆◆ The Daitya makes a single Khanda strike and compares the attack roll result to the ACs of up to two foes within their reach. This counts as two attacks for the Daitya's multiple attack penalty.

DANAVAS

Danavas are considered to be the distant cousins of the gigantic Daityas. The Danavas descend from a woman named Danu, also the wife of the sage Kashyapa. They are tall and powerful, but their physical frame pales in comparison to their natural affinity with magic. The most powerful Danavas command control of the various elements, smiting their foes with bolts of lightning, blasts of fire, and blades of ice. A Danava is a powerful asura, and one should think twice before crossing its path.

Mountainous Homes: The Danavas are few in number, with no more than a hundred in all of Devabhumi. As a result, they are quite isolated and prefer to live solitary lives in the mountains. They do not attempt to raise huge armies of Asuras. Instead, they prefer to grow their own power through years of training and meditation and seek out their foes on their own.

Crucial Allies: Despite their isolationist nature, the Danava can be powerful allies in a large Asura army. Their power is so great that one or two Danavas can take the place of hundreds of lesser asuras. This is why asura kings will spend a large quantity of time and resources to fund expeditions into the mountains, locate a Danava, and convince it to join their cause.

DANAVA

Large Fiend, Level 10

Perception +12; darkvision

Languages Patala, two additional languages

Skills Deception +11, Nature + 11, Occultism + 12
Str +3, **Dex** +0, **Con** +3, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +3

AC 24 (drapi), **Fort** +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +14
HP 150

Speed 30 ft.
Melee ◆ Baalam +14 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d10+6 piercing.

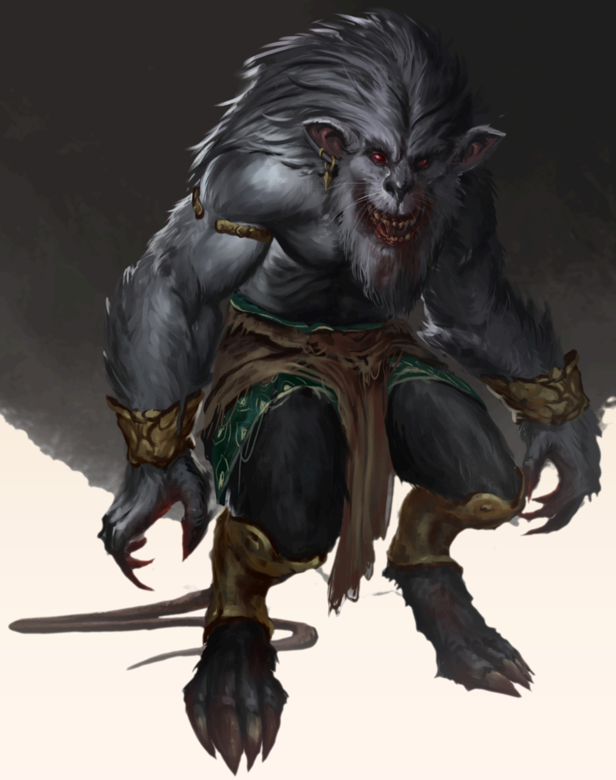
Ranged ◆ Baalam +14 (range increment 20 feet), **Damage** 1d10+6 piercing.
Occult Spontaneous Spells (DC 24, +16 to hit) **6th** Teleport (3 slots), **5th** Cone of Cold, Wall of Ice (4 slots), **4th** Dimension Door (4 slots), **3rd** Lightning Bolt (4 slots), **2nd** Darkness, Dispel Magic (4 slots), **1st** Harm, Magic Missile (4 slots), **Cantrip** (at-will) Chill Touch, Minor Illusion

KALAKEYAS

What **Daityas** and **Danavas** have in strength, Kalakeyas have in numbers. These Asuras are often the fodder in armies, due to their disposability. They breed often with each other, with each couple rearing anywhere from ten to fifty young Kalakeyas at once. Due to their ability to replenish their numbers at a lightning pace, it is near impossible to eradicate a Kalakeya colony once it has acquired a foothold.

Kalakeyas resemble hunchbacked humanoids with a slightly shorter stature of five feet, and they have long upper limbs that allow them to use all four limbs to walk. Their skin is covered with matted gray fur, and their mouths reveal short but sharp teeth to rend their prey with. These asuras resemble beasts, and their nature is the most beastlike out of all the other asuras.

Colonies: Kalakeyas reside in caves, forests, and remote ruins where there is room for them to reproduce and grow. Their societies are known as colonies, each ruled by a Daitya. Once their numbers are large enough, the Kalakeyas embark on a raid on a human settlement, seeking to take over. As a result, a growing Kalakeya colony often causes panic and fear among the surrounding populace.



Kalakeya by John Ric Detoon

KALAKEYA

Medium Fiend, Level 1

Perception +2; darkvision.

Languages Patala

Skills Stealth +6

Str +1, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** -1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -1

AC 15 (drapi), **Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

HP 21

Scurry Away ⤾ If the Kalakeya successfully hits a creature with a melee attack, it can use its remaining movement to move up to 15 feet away from the creature it attacked. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ claw +6 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+2 slashing

Pack Tactics (Trait) The Kalakeya gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls against a creature if at least one of its allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

NIVATAKAVACHAS

The Nivatakavachas (nee-vuh-tuh-kuh-vuh-chuhs) are a race of amphibian asuras that resemble humanoids with fins attached to their hands and feet. They brandish a set of crooked dagger-like teeth, and a line of razor sharp scales decorate their back. While they prefer to live in the sea, they are also able to live and breathe on land.

Nivatakavachas are highly xenophobic and distrustful of even other asuras. They keep to themselves, preferring to plot their actions independently of other asura powers. They are also highly secretive about their settlements, taking great care to disguise their walls with seaweed and shells. Any creature that happens to sight upon their kingdoms is quickly dispatched.

Underwater Kingdoms: These deep-sea dwelling asuras form large and lavish kingdoms under the sea, decorated with rare pearls and gold. Their valuables are usually acquired through plundering passing vessels. From their kingdoms, they plot advances into human territory, advancing to shores and coastlines. In history, nivatakavachas have managed to capture human land settlements and rule over them.

NIVATAKAVACHA

Medium Fiend, Level 3, Amphibious

Perception +7; darkvision.

Languages Patala, one additional language

Skills Stealth +7, Survival +6
Str +3, **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** -1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

Amphibious: The nivatakavacha can breathe both air and water.

Slippery Avoidance: When subjected to an effect that allows a Reflex save for half damage, it takes no damage on a success and half damage on a failure

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AC 20, **Fort** +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +6

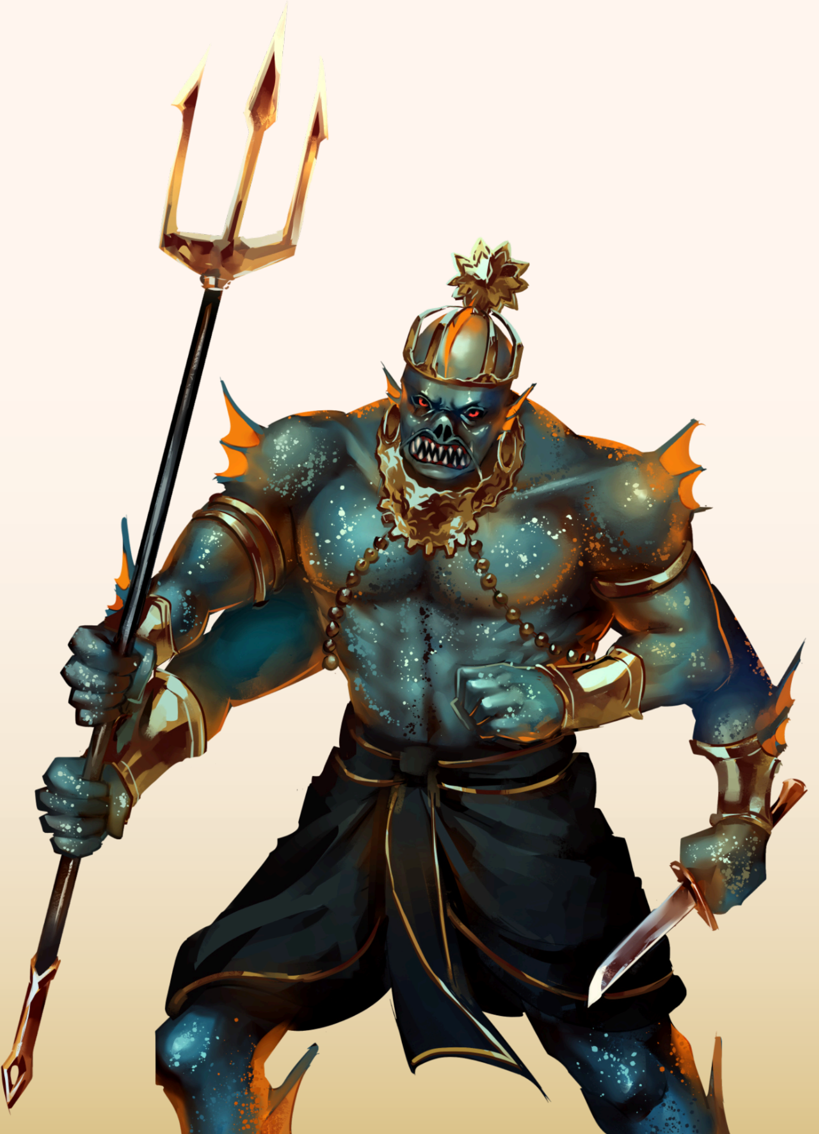
HP 55

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.
Melee ◆ Icy Trident +11, **Damage** 1d6+3 piercing plus 1d8 cold damage. The target must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or have its speed reduced by 10 feet for 1 minute.

Ranged ◆ Icy Trident +11 (range increment 20 ft.), **Damage** 1d6+3 piercing plus 1d8 cold damage. The target must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or have its speed reduced by 10 feet for 1 minute.

Drowner: When the nivatakavacha scores a critical hit against a creature that is holding its breath, the creature must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or lose its held breath.

Nivatakavacha by Dibyo Shree



RAKSHASA

When an asura truly embodies a particular evil, and becomes a champion in its cause, it transforms into a terrifying form whose name is known far and wide and whose presence is feared by even the strongest of warriors.

A rakshasa is in many ways the final form of an asura, it is what every asura wishes to be. The true form of a rakshasa is powerful and glorious, but it is able to disguise itself with other forms if it chooses to do so. A rakshasa possesses bright yellow eyes, a mouth with tiger-like fangs, and thick hair that is usually decorated with bones. It possesses multiple arms, ranging from four to sixteen. If it is particularly powerful, it also possesses multiple heads. Its physique is strong and hardy, and it adorns itself with a mixture of animal furs and fine silks.

Boon: Each rakshasa has a powerful boon granted to it by a god or spirit, allowing it to die only if certain conditions are met. If one does not know these conditions, which are guarded with utmost secrecy, it will seem that the rakshasa is immortal. Some examples of boons are listed below:

1. The rakshasa can only be killed by fire.
2. The rakshasa cannot be killed on land.
3. The rakshasa is immune to magical damage.
4. The rakshasa cannot be killed by a human.
5. The rakshasa can only be killed by someone who is more evil than it.
6. The rakshasa cannot be killed while it is meditating.
7. The rakshasa can only be killed by an Astra.
8. The rakshasa cannot be killed by any physical weapon

A rakshasa may have completed centuries of training, penance, and prayer to a god in order to gain power. It may even have acquired an **Astra**—a cataclysmic celestial weapon capable of mass destruction. Rakshasas are ideal villains for a large, overarching campaign. Consider customizing them and equipping them with powers beyond what is listed below in order to tailor them to your campaign.

RAKSHASA

Large Fiend, Level 19

Perception +21; greater darkvision

Languages Patala, three additional languages

Skills Arcana +18, Deception +21, Intimidation +21, Society +21

Str +7, **Dex** +4, **Con** +6, **Int** +5, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +7

Limited Immortality: The rakshasa cannot be reduced to 0 HP unless specific conditions are met. Until then, it can be damaged normally, but always stabilizes at 1 HP unless the condition is fulfilled.

AC 36 (kavacha), **Fort** +22, **Ref** +20, **Will** +21

HP 280, **Immunities**: Fear, Poison, **Resistances**: Non-magical physical damage

Asura Commander: 100 feet. Commanded or allied Asuras in the aura gain a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls, damage rolls, AC, saves, and skill checks.

Attack of Opportunity ⤾

Speed 30 ft.

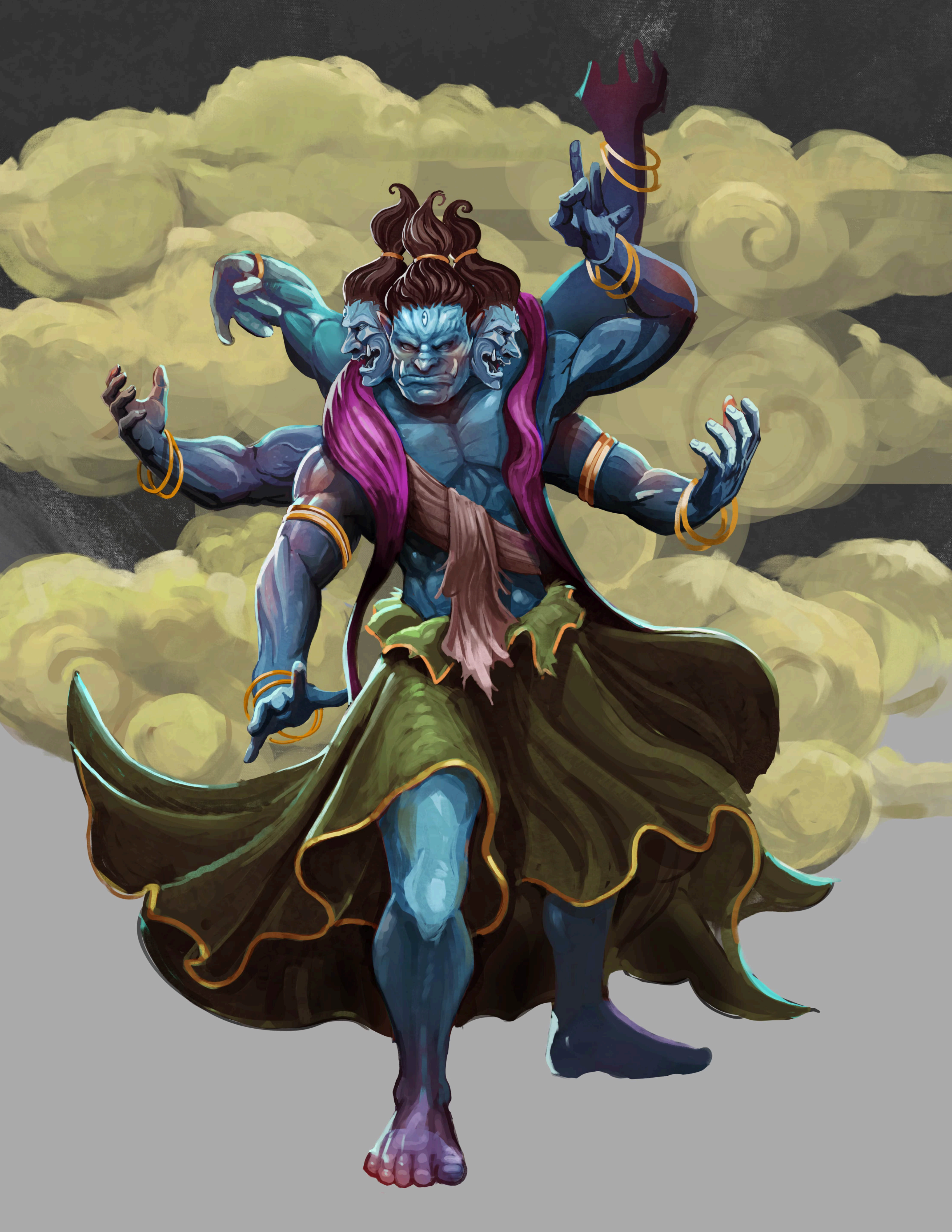
Melee Talwar +32 ◆ (forceful, sweep), **Damage** 2d6+12 slashing

Frightening Visage ◆◆ All hostile creatures within 30 ft. that can see the Daitya must make a DC 32 Will save or become Frightened 2 for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns to end it on a success. A successful save makes the creature immune to this effect for 24 hours.

Blade Storm ◆◆◆ The Rakshasa makes up to six Talvar Strikes, each against a different target. These attacks count toward the Rakshasa's multiple attack penalty, but the multiple attack penalty doesn't increase until after all the attacks.

Occult Spontaneous Spells (DC 34, +36 to hit) **10th** Freeze Time (1 slot), **9th** Seize Soul, **8th** Pinpoint, **7th** Sunburst (4 slots), **6th** Dominate (4 slots), **5th** Wall of Ice (4 slots), **4th** Dimension Door (4 slots), **3rd** Lightning Bolt (3x day), **2nd** Darkness, Dispel Magic (4 slots), **1st** Harm, Magic Missile (4 slots), **Cantrip** (at-will) Chill Touch, Minor Illusion

Rakshasa by Allan Damaso



Azdhaar

An azhaar is a fearsome winged serpent with a frilled mane, akin to dragons. The azdhaar is featured in folk tales among the people in the northern mountains as a creature that causes landslides and brings ruin to settlements. The azdhaar is a solitary dragon, living in caves and hunting humans, bears, and mountain goats. It prefers to bring its prey alive to its lair, where it plays with its food before devouring it.

A Monster for a Proper Hero: In many folktales, the azdhaar is slayed by a brave hero who endures a treacherous climb and the biting cold to slay the beast in its lair. This hero is often romanticized and worshipped as a savior, one that is yet to come.

Food for Hatchlings: An azdhaar does not need to eat often, typically surviving on one small meal every few days. When an azdhaar has hatchlings in its nest, however, it increases its hunting frequency to multiple times a day. Tiny azdhaar hatchlings are voracious eaters who prefer the taste of warm humans. Typically, when an azdhaar starts carrying away human prey on a regular basis, it is usually because it has just given birth to a set of hatchlings.

Wild Mounts: Despite their wild and fierce disposition, these creatures have been controlled and rode upon by several people of note. One is Rani Tehmina, a Zhav queen who had a strong affinity towards these creatures. She had captured a hatchling while it were still young and formed a bond with it, allowing the queen to ride upon this dragon as it grew.

Azdhaar

Large Dragon, Level 13

Perception +16; greater darkvision

Languages –

Skills Intimidation +18, Stealth +12, Survival +12
Str +6, **Dex** +1, **Con** +5, **Int** +0, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +4

AC 26, **Fort** +19, **Ref** +12, **Will** +14

HP 200, **Immunities**: Fire

Frightful Presence (Aura, Emotion, Fear, Mental) 30 feet, DC 23 Will. Creatures within range must succeed or become Frightened 2 (Frightened 1 on a success).

Tail Swipe ⤾ If a creature within 10 feet successfully hits the azdhaar, the azdhaar can make a tail attack.

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 40 ft.

Melee ◆ bite +21 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+10 piercing plus 1d10 fire

Melee ◆ claw +21 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 slashing

Melee ◆ tail +21 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d12+10 bludgeoning

Wing Lash ◆◆ The Azdhaar beats its powerful wings, creating a gust of wind in a 30-foot conethat knocks back nearby creatures. Creatures must make a DC 26 Reflex save.

Critical Success: The creature is unaffected.

Success: The creature is pushed 10 feet directly away from the Azdhaar.

Failure: The creature is pushed 15 feet directly away from the Azdhaar and falls prone.

Critical Failure: The creature is pushed 15 feet directly away, falls prone, and takes 2d6 bludgeoning damage from being slammed into the ground or other objects.

Bhootas

Stories speak of a woman dressed in all white that can be sighted in an old bungalow, a place where a brutal murder took place. The stories speak of the woman with backwards feet floating a few inches above the ground. Neighbors report hearing ghastly screams at night, loud enough that they have to plug their ears to sleep. The village elders call that sight a bhoota, a trapped spirit that is unable to move into the next life.

A bhoota is the spirit of a person that remains behind in the world of mortals, unable to reincarnate. This is usually caused by a disturbed or violent death, an unfulfilled desire, or the failure of the person's descendants to perform funeral rites.

Eerie Shapeshifters: Bhootas can shapeshift into humanoids of various shapes and ages, but are most commonly seen in the original form of the person they were before they died. They appear as humans and can be seen and heard, but cannot be felt. A telltale sign that you may be seeing a bhoota is their feet are backwards. Sometimes, a bhoota may go to great lengths to disguise their feet to prevent discovery.

Places of Ruin: Bhootas typically haunt places where great violence has taken place, leaving behind ruins. This includes battlefields, murder bungalows, and places of natural calamity. If a mortal (especially human) wanders into a haunted place, a bhoota will attack the creature out of its vengefulness. The mortal has what the bhoota desires: a material body that is able to feel and taste.

Transient: Bhootas are trapped by their own form, unable to feel like mortals but also unable to move on to their next life. Killing a bhoota is one way to eliminate their spirit form. The only other way to completely eliminate a bhoota is to perform an elaborate funeral rite requiring the hair of the deceased person and 10 gp worth of ritual items.

Ghostly Possession: Bhootas are attracted to milk that is left out at night, just like flies are attracted to sugar. Whenever they discover milk that is left out in this way, they can immerse themselves in it. The next creature to drink the milk will be possessed by the bhoota. This is why it is a common practice, especially in rural villages, to never leave milk or sweets out at night.

Wards Against Bhootas: Bhootas have a natural aversion to the earth or soil, as it is considered holy. Sprinkling dirt upon oneself is a way to protect against a bhoota. They can also be warded off by burning turmeric or the herb Bhotkeshi.

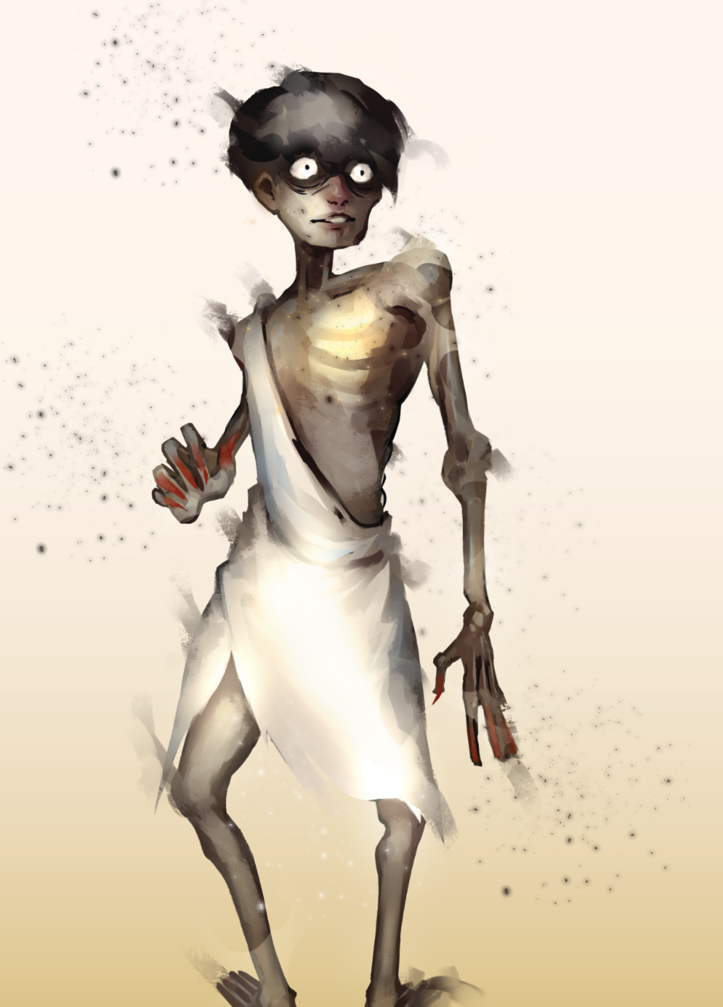
There are many different types of bhootas, with their unique forms, powers, and circumstances of how they came to be.

Acheri

When a child faces a death due to disease or starvation, its spirit remains behind as an acheri. They possess a form similar to their human body, but they lack eyelids and possess a cachexic, skeletal appearance. Like other bhootas, they are active at night.

An acheri searches for the life it never got to experience. During the night, one may hear sounds of laughter and children playing. An acheri may also visit homes where a great quantity of food is being prepared, motivated by a great hunger. When the acheri finds out that it cannot eat the food, it attacks those who prepared it in a fit of rage.

Ill Omens: Those who see or hear an acheri at night are said to be near death's door. These omens are usually towards other children or elderly, who will similarly die of an ailment or hunger. In combat, an acheri will typically target the youngest or frailest creature.



Acheri by Dibyo Shree

Acheri

Small Undead, Level 1, Incorporeal, Spirit

Perception +4; darkvision

Languages Languages it knew in life

Skills Deception +5, Stealth +6
Str -5, **Dex** +3, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

Disguise While they have more than 20 HP, the acheri appears to be a living creature. They have an automatic result of 21 on Deception checks and DCs to conceal their undead status.

AC 18, **Fort** +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4
HP 25 (negative healing), **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 5 (except force, ghost touch, spirit, or vitality; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Speed fly 30 ft.
Melee ◆ life drain +6 to hit, **Damage** 2d6+2 void damage, and the target must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or become drained 1 for the next 24 hours. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this ability dies.
Frightful Scream ◆◆ (Auditory, Divine, Emotion, Fear, Mental) The acheri lets out a bloodcurling scream, forcing each living creature within 30 feet to attempt a DC 19 Will save. On a failure, a creature becomes frightened 2 (or frightened 3 on a critical failure). On a success, a creature is temporarily immune to this acheri's Frightful Scream for 1 minute.

Churel

A churel is the spirit of a creature who died an unnaturally cruel death, often while vulnerable in some way. The spirit lingers behind with a great desire for vengeance. The spirit is not satisfied however, even after killing those responsible for its death. Its rage and bitterness continues to blaze, burning alive anyone who is unfortunate enough to stumble upon it.

Vicious Beauty: Churels have the ability to transform themselves into beautiful people, charming unsuspecting victims before tearing them apart. Spine-chilling stories tell of men meeting a beautiful woman and being charmed by her beauty. After realizing that the stranger's feet are facing backwards, the victim watches in horror as the spirit reveals its true form and kills him.

Churel

Medium Undead, Level 3, Incorporeal, Spirit

Perception +7; darkvision

Languages Languages it knew in life

Skills Diplomacy + 8, Deception +8, Stealth +6
Str -5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +4

Disguise While they have more than 30 HP, the churel appears to be a living creature. They have an automatic result of 21 on Deception checks and DCs to conceal their undead status.

AC 18, **Fort** +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8
HP 35 (negative healing), **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 5 (except force, ghost touch, spirit, or vitality; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Speed fly 30 ft.
Melee ◆ strength drain +10 **Damage** 2d6+2 void damage, and the target must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or become enfeebled 1 for the next 24 hours. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this ability dies.
Shapeshift ◆ The churel can assume the appearance of a Medium or Small humanoid it has seen. This transformation is perfect in all aspects except for the backwards feet, which can be detected with a DC 20 Perception check. The churel reverts to its true form upon death.
Frightful Scream ◆◆ (Auditory, Divine, Emotion, Fear, Mental) The churel lets out a bloodcurling scream, forcing each living creature within 30 feet to attempt a DC 22 Will save. On a failure, a creature becomes frightened 2 (or frightened 3 on a critical failure). On a success, a creature is temporarily immune to this churel's Frightful Scream for 1 minute.

PRETA

A preta is a creature who did not face a particularly violent or distressing death, but their spirit still remained behind in this world. The creature was often one of great desires, a slave to the pleasures and senses of the body. When they face death, they often face a great sorrow and longing to enjoy more, and as a result remain behind as a spirit.

Ravenous Forms: Pretas have a gaunt, pale figure with hollow eyes and round, protruding bellies. Other bhootas prefer to disguise their forms an an attempt to deceive and kill living creatures, but pretas prefer to remain in their original form. This makes them easy to identify, but can invoke even greater fear.

Cursed Existence: Pretas are cursed to roam the land in a constant desire after the material things they cannot enjoy. They wander from place to place, drawn by the sounds of cooling mountain streams or delicious grilled meat, but are unable to satisfy their desires. Their existence is a constant torture. As a result, they lash out at mortals out of resentment and jealousy.

Cautionary Tales: The stories of pretas are often cautionary ones, designed to warn children about the dangers of excess. If one's desire for wealth, greed, or pleasure is too great, one may end up wandering for a long time as a preta.

PRETA

Medium Undead, Level 4, Incorporeal, Spirit

Perception +8; darkvision

Languages Languages it knew in life

Skills Stealth +11

Str -5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

AC 19, **Fort** +8, **Ref** +11, **Will** +9

HP 45 (negative healing), **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 5 (except force, ghost touch, spirit, or vitality; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Vengeful Hastening ⤾ If the preta takes damage from a creature within 60 feet that it can see, it can move up to its speed closer to the creature that damaged it.

Speed fly 30 ft.

Melee ◆ energy drain +12 **Damage** 2d8+4 void damage, and the target must succeed at a DC 22 Fortitude save or become clumsy 1 for the next 24 hours. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this ability dies.

Shapeshift ◆ The preta can assume the appearance of a Medium or Small humanoid it has seen. This transformation is perfect in all aspects except for the backwards feet, which can be detected with a DC 20 Perception check. The preta reverts to its true form upon death.

Frightful Scream ◆◆ (Auditory, Divine, Emotion, Fear, Mental) The preta lets out a bloodcurling scream, forcing each living creature within 30 feet to attempt a DC 25 Will save. On a failure, a creature becomes frightened 2 (or frightened 3 on a critical failure). On a success, a creature is temporarily immune to this preta's Frightful Scream for 1 minute.

Vetala

Highly intelligent bhootas who have managed to possess a material body and live in it for centuries are known as Vetalas. They have spent years meditating and acquiring knowledge, providing them with an uncanny insight into mortal behavior and the ability to predict the future.

These beings are malevolent, using their intelligence to help them gather power and achieve immortality. Whenever their material body gives out, they simply move into another one. The only way to kill a Vetala is to find its original body and cremate it, sending the lingering spirit back into the cycle of Samsara. Vetalas, who use their spirit form as a tool to achieve power, often take great care to disguise their grave and prevent disturbance to their original body.

Haunted Cremation Grounds: Vetalas typically haunt cremation grounds, allowing them to meditate in peace and to draw power from the inauspiciousness. They can also possess uncremated corpses, moving and commanding the body as if it were still alive.

Vetala

Medium Undead, Level 10

Perception +18; greater darkvision

Languages Patala, 6 additional languages

Skills Arcana +22, Intimidation +18, Occultism +22, Stealth +18

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +4, **Int** +5, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +1

AC 19, **Fort** +19, **Ref** +18, **Will** +19

HP 150 (rejuvenation, negative healing), **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Resistances** all damage 10 (except force, ghost touch, spirit, or vitality; double resistance vs. non-magical)

Attack of Opportunity ⤾

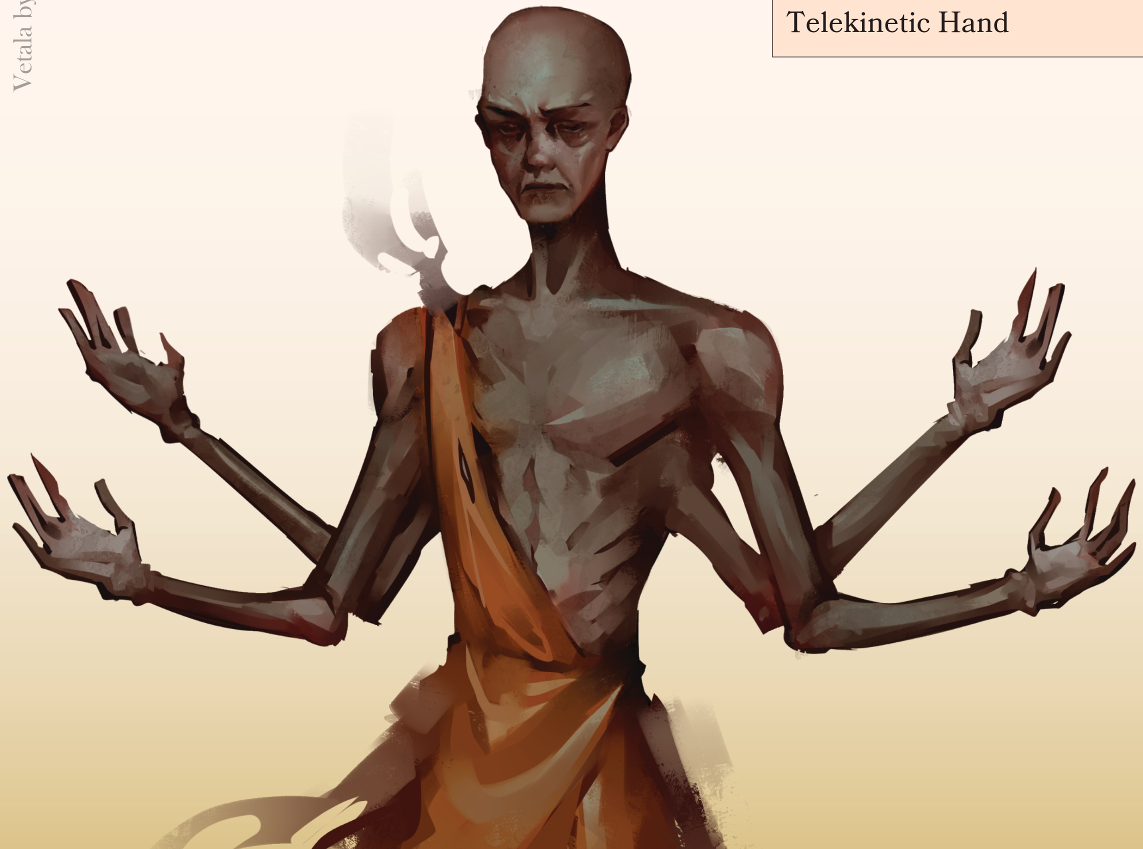
Speed 40 ft, fly 30 ft.

Melee ◆ palm strike +21, **Damage** 3d4+6 bludgeoning damage, and the target must succeed at a DC 26 Will save or become clumsy 1.

Melee ◆ strangling beads +21 (range 15 ft.), **Damage** 3d4+6 bludgeoning damage, and the target is pulled within 5 feet of the vetala and becomes grabbed (Escape DC 25).

Ranged ◆ chakra +21 (agile, range increment 30 ft.), **Damage** 3d4+6 slashing damage.

Arcane Innate Spells (DC 34, +36 to hit) **5th** Scouting Eye, Howling Blizzard; **4th** Suggestion, Vision of Death; **3rd** Blindness, Dispel Magic,**2nd** Vnvisibility (×2); **1st** Summon Undead (×2); **Cantrips** (5th) Dancing Lights, Detect Magic, Prestidigitation Telekinetic Hand



Vetala by Dibyo Shree

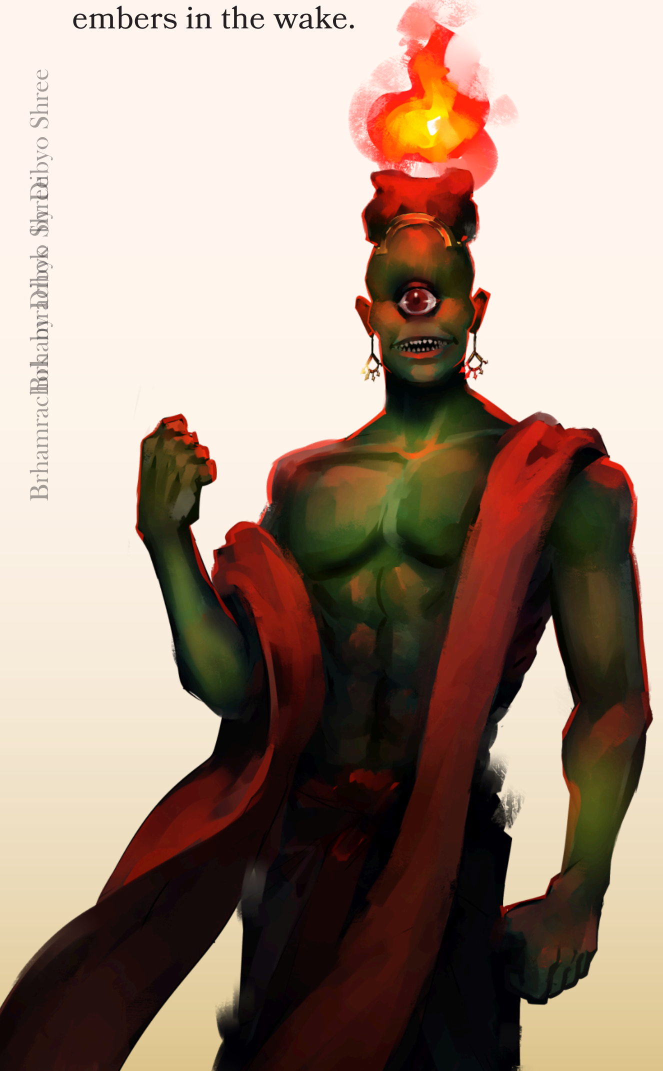
BHRAMRACHOK

A young boy spots a dim orange light in the misty forest. His mother picks up the boy, closes his eyes, and starts to run in the direction opposite of the light. She has heard of the dreadful creature that has followed her and her son— the Bhramrachok.

This creature vaguely resembles a large humanoid with a large singular eye on its forehead. It has a broad mouth with a sharp row of tiny teeth. On its head, it holds a paralyzing fire pot—emanating with light. It lures its victims and devours them when they discover it.

Haunter of the Wild: The Bhramrachok haunts wild and desolate places, of unspoiled wilderness. Travelers frequently encounter this monster, reporting sights of a glowing fire in the wilderness. Children tend to notice this light more often, crying out "rachok, rachok!"

Firebrand: The Bhramrachok is fond of fire and enjoys burning things down. After it tracks someone, it follows them to their house and devours them. Then, it will burn down their hosue and leave nothing but ash and smoldering embers in the wake.



Brhamrachok by Dibyo Shree

BHRAMRACHOK

Large Humanoid, Level 7

Perception +6; darkvision

Languages –

Skills Intimidation +5, Stealth +7, Survival +7

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +1

AC 19, **Fort** +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

HP 70, **Resistances** fire 5

Captivating Light (Aura, Mental) 120 feet. A creature that starts its turn within 120 feet and can see the Bhramrachok's light must attempt a DC 20 Will save. On a failure, the creature is charmed for 1 minute. While charmed, it must move toward the Bhramrachok, using all its movement each turn. Once within 5 feet, the creature gazes in awe and takes no actions. Creatures can avert their gaze as a reaction, avoiding the save but treating the Bhramrachok as invisible. A creature can retry the save at the end of its turn to end the effect.

Spill the Pot ⤾ When the Bhramrachok takes 20 or more damage in a single turn, it spills magma-like liquid from its pot. All creatures within 5 feet must succeed a DC 20 Reflex Save or be restrained and take 1d10 fire damage at the start of each turn. A creature can spend an action to remove the liquid, ending the restrained condition.

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ greedy swipe +12 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+4 slashing

Alone (Mental) ◆◆ The Bhramrachok forces a target within 30 feet to succeed on a DC 20 Will Save or become unable to perceive or interact with its allies for 1 minute. The creature can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns to end this effect.

Chatiboy

A vicious howl is heard by members of a mountain village at night. Panicked, they begin to hastily pack their supplies and evacuate the village by midnight. They know the meaning of this howl; it heralds the coming of a large flash flood.

Forerunners of Floods: The chatiboy is an elemental that is often the cause of a great landslide or flash flood. Before carrying out the calamity, it warns those around it with a grim howl. As a neutral steward of the land, it merely does what it must. It does not seek to harm anyone specifically, nor does it have a malevolent desire. If one manages to slay the chatiboy, then the landslides and floods will stop, saving the lives of the surrounding inhabitants. But the true cost of stopping these natural events may be greater,

Chatiboy

Medium Elemental, Level 6

Perception +8; darkvision, wavesense (imprecise) 30 feet.

Languages Understands all but cannot speak.

Skills Acrobatics +9, Stealth +9

Str +1, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

AC 22, **Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7

HP 50; **Immunities** poison, **Resistances** bludgeoning, slashing (from non-magical attacks)

Charged Particles: When the Chatiboy takes electricity damage, it crackles with energy for 1 minute, adding 2d6 electricity damage to its melee attacks.

The Quickening ⤾ When the Chatiboy takes damage from a weapon attack, it can move up to half its speed without provoking attacks of opportunity.

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

Melee ◆ rend +12, **Damage** 1d8+4 piercing

Flash Flood ◆◆◆ The Chatiboy summons a flood in a 60-cone. All creatures in the area must make a DC 23 Reflex save. On a failure, creatures take 2d10 bludgeoning damage and are pushed 10 feet directly away from the Chatiboy.

Landslide ◆◆◆ The Chatiboy creates a landslide in a 60-foot cone. All creatures must make a DC 23 Reflex save or take 4d12 bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.

CHUMUR DEKI

The sound of heavy iron legs are heard stomping through the snow. Those that hear it know to stay inside their homes, for those that step outside may never return. The chumur deki is a creature that haunts snowy winter towns, warning the inhabitants with the sound of heavy iron legs. Those that go inside their homes and close their curtains are safe. If one takes even a small look at the creature, their body will stiffen up and the chumur deki will come to collect its victim.

Paralyzing Glare: It is important to never look at a chumur deki. If you happen to be caught by the glare of one, you will be paralyzed. The chumur deki resembles a humanoid with a dupatta concealing its head and face. Its body is made of thick chunks of iron, like trunks of a tree. Some say the chamur deki was once a talented blacksmith who sought to create an astra, but was cursed by the gods for attempting to replicate their power.

Real Life Legend: The Chumur Deki is a monster that is believed to haunt the real-life area of Kashmir, the northernmost area of India and Pakistan. It is active during the Chillai Kailan, the coldest part of winter that lasts around 40 days.

CHUMUR DEKI

Medium Humanoid, Level 8

Perception +9

Languages Any two languages.

Skills Acrobatics +13, Intimidation +7

Str +4 **Dex** -1, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -1

AC 26, **Fort** +12, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

HP 80

Sturdy: The Chumur Deki has a +2 circumstantial bonus against effects that would knock it prone.

Speed 25 ft.

Melee ◆ rend +12, **Damage** 1d8+4 slashing

Paralyzing Glare ◆◆ (Visual) The Chumur Deki stares at a creature it can see within 30 feet. It can force the creature to attempt a DC 21 Fortitude Save. On a failure, the creature becomes paralyzed for 1 minute. The creature can repeat the save at the end of its turn to end the effect.

After 3 cumulative failures, the creature is turned into a chunk of ice. A creature can avert its gaze as a reaction, avoiding the saving throw but treating the Chumur Deki as invisible.

Dvarapala

The dvarapala are large stone guardians that stand outside tombs, palaces, glades, and other important landmarks. In their disguised state, they are indistinguishable from stone statues. When awakened, they move in a manner similar to humans and attack any living creature that disturbs the sanctum.

The dvarapala re usually armed with a gada or clubs, but can be empty-handed or hold stone pillars. They are decorated with stone jewelry including necklaces, bracelets, and rings.

Even Groups: Where there is one, there is usually another. Dvarapalas are created in even numbered groups. This is because dvarapalas are embedded in pillars, and it is auspicious for a building to always possess an even number of pillars.

Vigilant Ones: The dvarapala are neutral constructs, but they have the ability to sense a creature's alignment and intention. If the dvarapala senses that a creature intends on defiling or desecrating a landmark, it will animate and defend the place.

Dvarapala

Large Construct, Level 8

Perception +15

Languages Any two languages.

Skills Perception +15, Stealth +10

Str +6 **Dex** +0, **Con** +5, **Int** +2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** -1

AC 27, **Fort** +18, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13

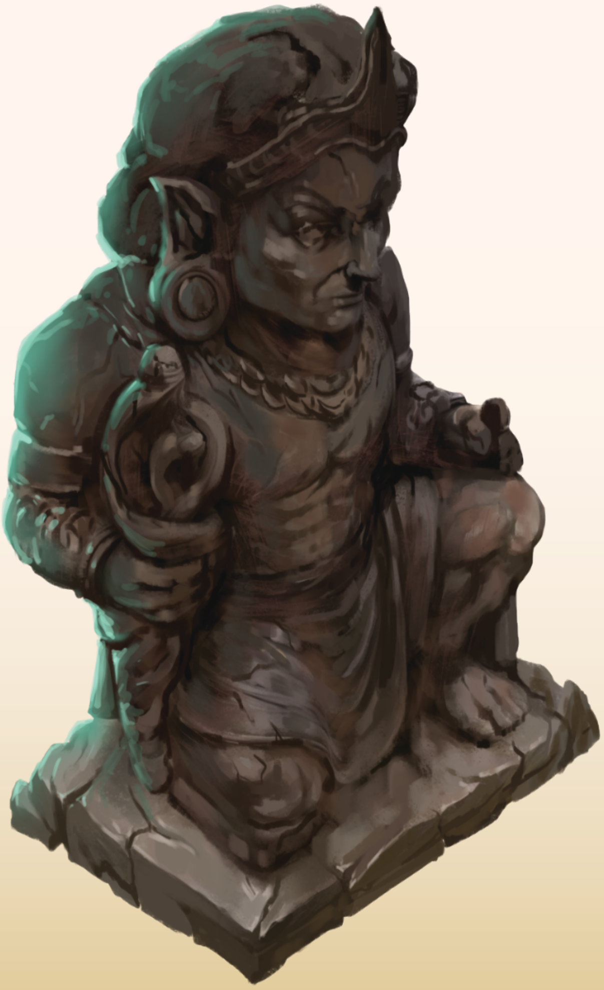
HP 140; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, spirit, unconscious, vitality, void; **Resistances** physical 10

Speed 25 ft.

Melee ◆ gada +19 (forceful, shove, reach 10 ft.), **Damage** 1d10+8 bludgeoning

Lightning Beads ◆◆ The Dvarapala hurls crackling beads at a point within 30 feet. All creatures in a 10-foot radius must make a DC 25 Reflex Save. On a failure, they take 3d10 electricity damage, or half as much on a success.

Innate Arcane Spells 3rd Mind Reading



Dvarapala by John Ric Detoon

GAJASIMHA

The gajasimha has the head of an elephant and the body of a lion. It is a wild creature that dwells in the eastern and southern jungles. The southern people Thaara are famous for taming these creatures and using them as mounts.

In their wild form, they form small herds and feed on low-growing plants. They generally prefer to stay away from civilization, avoiding contact with humans. If spotted or cornered in the wilderness, they will charge and attack. When tamed, they serve as tough and loyal mounts, capable of replacing horses. Their tusks are used to gore opponents and their claws can tear creatures apart.

GAJASIMHA

Large Animal, Level 1

Perception +5; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Acrobatics +6, Athletics +7

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** -4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -1

AC 14; **Fort** +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

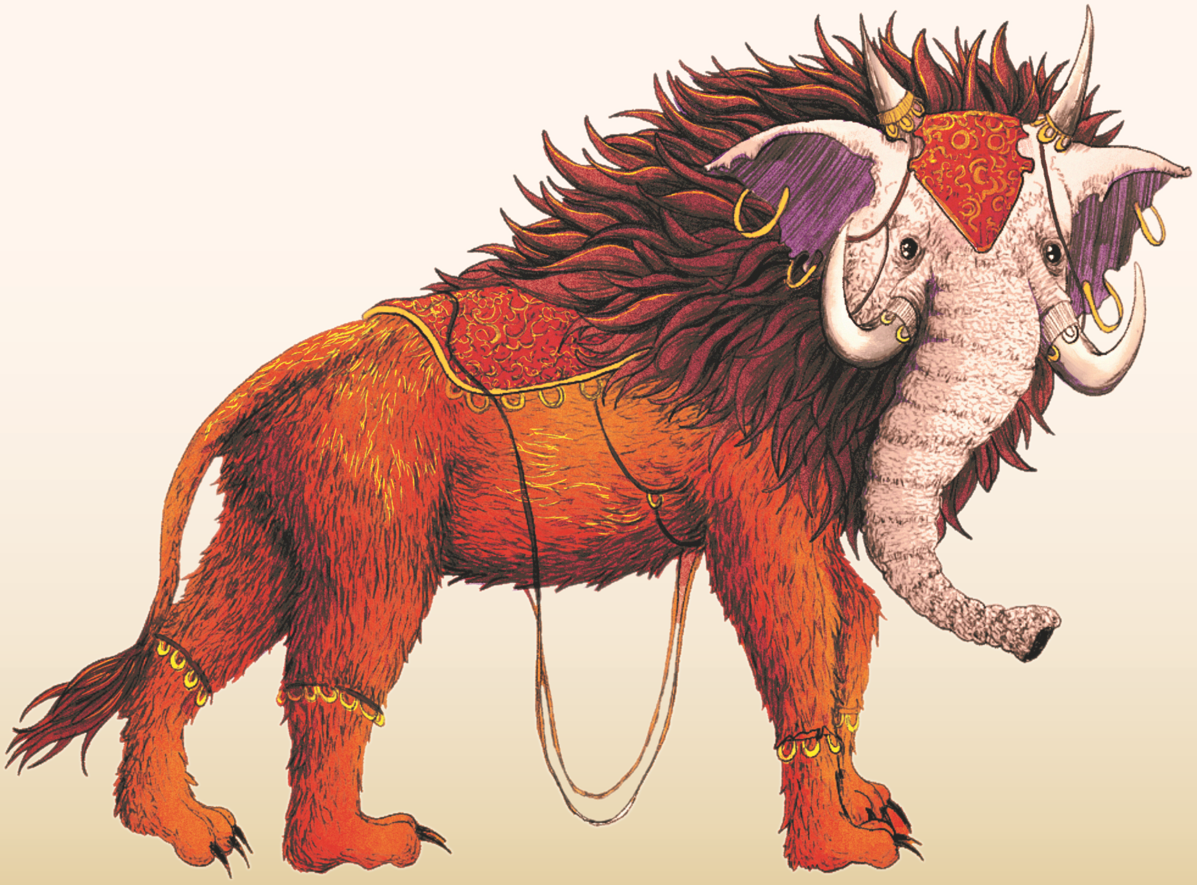
HP 24

Buck ⤾ DC 16

Speed 40 feet

Melee ◆ gore +6, **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Melee ◆ claws +6, **Damage** 1d6 +4 slashing



Gajasimha by Marlon Felipe Ruiz

Gangine

A rare race of humanoids who have no need to eat or drink, instead drawing sustenance from pleasant scents. They are attracted to flower gardens, blooming orchards, and perfumes worn by nobility.

Although generally harmless, they can be a nuisance for travelers who are swarmed by groups of five or ten gangines. They sneak up while you look away and when you are startled, they dash away behind the trees. Some alchemists and sorcerers employ these creatures as servants.

Unsettling Harmlessness: The general form of a gangine is quite terrifying. They are short, stubby creatures with dense hair and bulging eyes. They lack a mouth, adding to their unsettling form. Their palms possess nostrils similar to their noses, with which they can smell as much as they want.

Aversion to Stench: The gangines are averse to any form of bad smell, and stay far away from it. Thus, one way to prevent attracting these creatures while traveling is to carry a foul smelling item, usually rotten garlic or sulfuric salt.

Gangine

Small Fey, Level 1

Perception +9, scent (imprecise) 200 ft.
Languages Any two languages.
Skills Acrobatics +9, Stealth +9, Survival +5
Str +2 **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -2

AC 19, **Fort** +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5
HP 80

Agile Feet ◇ The Gangine can take one Stride or Step action as a free action on each of its turns.

Unsettling Form (Aura, Mental) Creatures within 5 feet of the Gangine that are about to make an attack must a DC 17 Will Save. On a failure, the creature takes a -2 penalty for all their attacks against the Gangine until the end of their turn. A creature that succeeds on this save is immune to the Gangine's unsettling form for 24 hours.

Speed 30 ft.
Melee ◆ fist +5, **Damage** 1d4+2 bludgeoning

Hemaraj

This crocodilian creature lurks in swamps and bogs, believed to be the descendant of a greedy king. According to folk tales, there once lived a king named Hemaraj, who desired a noble and worthy heir who could carry on his lineage. Hemaraj had many children, but found faults in each of them. He desired perfection. Finding that all of his children were unworthy for his throne, Hemaraj prayed to Brahma, asking for the perfect heir. Brahma fulfilled his request, bestowing Hemaraj with a beautiful child that grew up to be wise, knowledgeable, and strong.

However, Hemaraj still managed to find a flaw in the child and scorned it. Brahma, angry at the greedy king, transformed his children into frightening crocodilian monsters. Hemaraj was disgraced and after his death, the monsters were given his name.

Swamp Predator: The hemaraj prefers to wait in stagnant waters, waiting for prey to come close. When it is time to strike, the hemaraj reveals its true form and snatches its prey with its monstrous jaw, and drowns it in the shallow water. The hemaraj prefers to prey on humans and other warm-blooded creatures. It can sense the presence of warm-blooded creatures nearby and will slowly creep towards them.

Hemaraj

Large Beast, Level 8

Perception +10, low-light vision

Languages –

Skills Athletics +14, Stealth +9 (+14 in water)

Str +4 **Dex** -1, **Con** +3, **Int** -1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

Deep Breath The Hemaraj can hold its breath for about 4 hours.

AC 24, **Fort** +13, **Ref** +11, **Will** +9,

HP 150

Ambusher: Hemaraj gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls made against creatures that are flat-footed.

Speed 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee ◆ bite +14, **Damage** 2d10+4 piercing and the target is grabbed (Escape DC 24). The target is restrained while grabbed, and Hemaraj cannot use its Bite attack on another creature while maintaining the grab.

Melee ◆ tail +14, **Damage** 1d10+4 bludgeoning

Death Roll ◆◆◆ Hemaraj rolls a grabbed creature underwater (or against the ground if on land), tearing at it with its vicious jaws. The grabbed creature must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or take 3d10 slashing damage and become prone. On a success, the creature takes half damage and is not knocked prone.

Kamadhenu

Kamadhenu is the name of the legendary wish-granting cow that is recalled in folktales and stories told to children. She represents the sustenance provided by cattle to the inhabitants of Devabhumi and is sometimes worshiped as a goddess.

Kamadhenu was born during the churning of the cosmic ocean and was possessed by the ancient sage Vashista. Ambitious kings and queens who heard of her wish-granting power attempted to steal her from the sage, but faced devastating consequences.

After decades of faithfully serving Vashista, he finally set her free into the wilderness to roam and eat wild grass. Very few mortals have seen her, and those that have were wise enough to leave her alone after being granted a wish. It is said that an aspect of Vashista surrounds Kamadhenu and curses anyone who seeks to take her.

Wish Granting: If one finds and recognizes Kamadhenu by seeing her pearly white skin, garlands of flowers, and holy marks upon her body, then they can ask for a wish. The Kamadhenu then grants the wish, and it functions as a Wish spell. Kamadhenu can grant only one wish per day, regardless of the person.

Kamadhenu

Large Celestial, Level 12

Perception +21, darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Languages Understands all but cannot speak.

Skills Religion +13

Str +2 **Dex** +1, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +4

AC 23, **Fort** +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +20

HP 201; **Immunities** Charmed, Exhaustion, Frightened, **Resistances** Fire (10)

Blinding Light (Divine) ⟲ When a hostile creature enters a space adjacent to Kamadhenu, a burst of blinding light emanates from her eyes. The creature must succeed on a DC 26 Fortitude save or be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Vashista's Protection (Divine) ⟲ Whenever a creature inflicts damage upon Kamadhenu, that creature takes the same amount of fire damage. If a creature is knocked unconscious by this ability, it falls into a deep sleep for 1d8 days, which can only be ended by Remove Curse or a similar effect.

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ hoof +17 (holy)**, Damage** 2d6+4 bludgeoning

Maiming Curse ◆◆ One creature of Kamadhenu's choice must succeed a DC 26 Will Save or be cursed for the next 24 hours. Whenever a cursed creature is hit with an attack that bypasses its armor class, the attack automatically turns into a critical hit. On a successful save, the creature is immune to Kamadhenu's maiming curse for the next 24 hours.

Innate Divine Spells (spell DC 29, spell attack +21) Wish (1/day, cast ◆◆◆, ignores cost requirements)

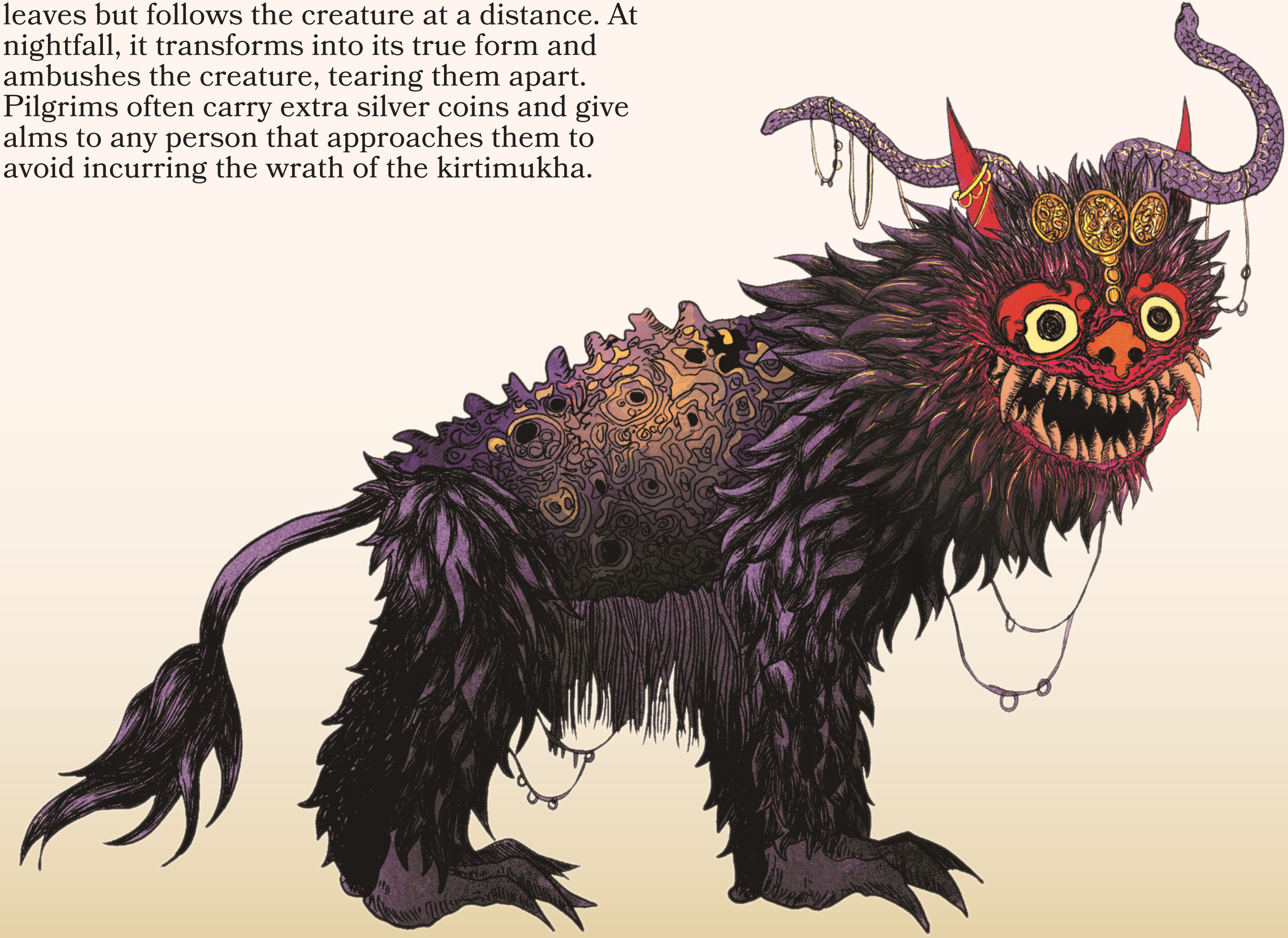
KIRTIMUKHA

The kirtimukha is a lion-headed creature with monstrous proportions, bulging eyes, and dagger-like claws. The word “Kirtimukha” means glorious face. It is depicted in art with a gaping mouth that swallows the viewer.

This terrifying creature was created from the third eye of Shiva. There once lived an asura king who, out of pride and arrogance, went to challenge Shiva to give up his wife Parvati. In a lapse of rage, Shiva opened his third eye and this fearsome creature was born, and it devoured the prideful asura. Since its birth, the kirtimukha feeds on the pride and greed of humans.

Temple Guardian: This monster guards ancient temples in the wilderness, protecting them from those it deems unworthy to enter. When it comes to prideful and greedy creatures, the kirtimukha is merciless in its demeanor, often tearing their bodies apart like a lion does with its prey.

It determines one’s character by testing them. It changes its shape into a humble beggar and approaches the creature, asking for alms. If scorned or refused, the disguised kirtimukha leaves but follows the creature at a distance. At nightfall, it transforms into its true form and ambushes the creature, tearing them apart. Pilgrims often carry extra silver coins and give alms to any person that approaches them to avoid incurring the wrath of the kirtimukha.



Kirtimukha by Marlon Felipe Ruiz

Kirtimukha

Large Beast, Level 9

Perception +15, darkvision

Languages Up to three languages

Skills Athletics +16, Deception +10, Religion +12, Stealth +12

Str +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** +2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

AC 25, **Fort** +15, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

HP 155; **Immunities** Frightened

Frightful Presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 60 feet, DC 22

Pounce ⤾ When the kirtimukha is hit by a ranged attack, it can a move half its Speed toward the attacker. This movement doesn't trigger reactions.

Speed 40 ft.

Melee ◆ swipe +17 (reach 10 ft.), **Damage** 2d6+6 slashing

Melee ◆ bite +17, **Damage** 3d10+6 piercing. The target must make a DC 22 Fortitude save. On a failed save, the creature is sickened 1 and takes 1d10 persistent poison damage. The creature can spend an action to retch and reduce the sickened condition, repeating the save to end the persistent damage.

Change Shape ◆ (concentrate, divine, polymorph) The Kurtimukha can change into a Small or Medium humanoid. It can use this action again to return to its natural shape or transform into a new shape. It loses access to its attacks and Frightful Presence in humanoid form but retains all other abilities and stats.

Shiva's Wrath ◆◆◆ The kirtimukha is the personification of Shiva's wrath. It can channel that energy into a singular ray coming from its terrifying mouth. This ray can target a single creature up to 100 feet away, penetrating any magical barrier. Each creature in the line must make a DC 24 Fortitude save.

Critical Success: The creature is unaffected.

Success: The creature takes half of 8d8 fire damage.

Failure: The creature takes 8d8 fire damage.

Critical Failure: The creature is reduced to 0 HP, turning to ash if slain.

MAKARA

According to rumors, a handful of tribes in the eastern jungles have tamed an interesting sea-dwelling mount for the purpose of naval combat. This creature has the head of an elephant and the body of a small crocodile. It uses its trunk to breathe air like any land-dwelling mammal, but lives and feeds in the sea.

Water Elephants: Like elephants on land, the makara congregates in herds and vigilantly guards its territory in its wild form. Fishermen and sailors may find a herd of makara attempting to ram their vessels as a result of inadvertently sailing through their territory. It is not unheard of for small boats and canoes to be destroyed by a herd of these angry cetaceans.

Trusty Mounts: When domesticated, the makara is obedient and brave. Its tusks can be used to intentionally destroy the ships and vessels of an opposing tribe. It can also be rode upon in a manner similar to a horse. Naval warriors often engage in full-scale battles in the sea while riding these mounts, armed with spears, axes, and bows.

MAKARA

Large Animal, Level 2

Perception +6; low-light vision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

Skills Athletics +8, Survival +6

Str +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -2

Siege. The makara's gore attack deals double damage to ships and naval vessels.

AC 16; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5

HP 30

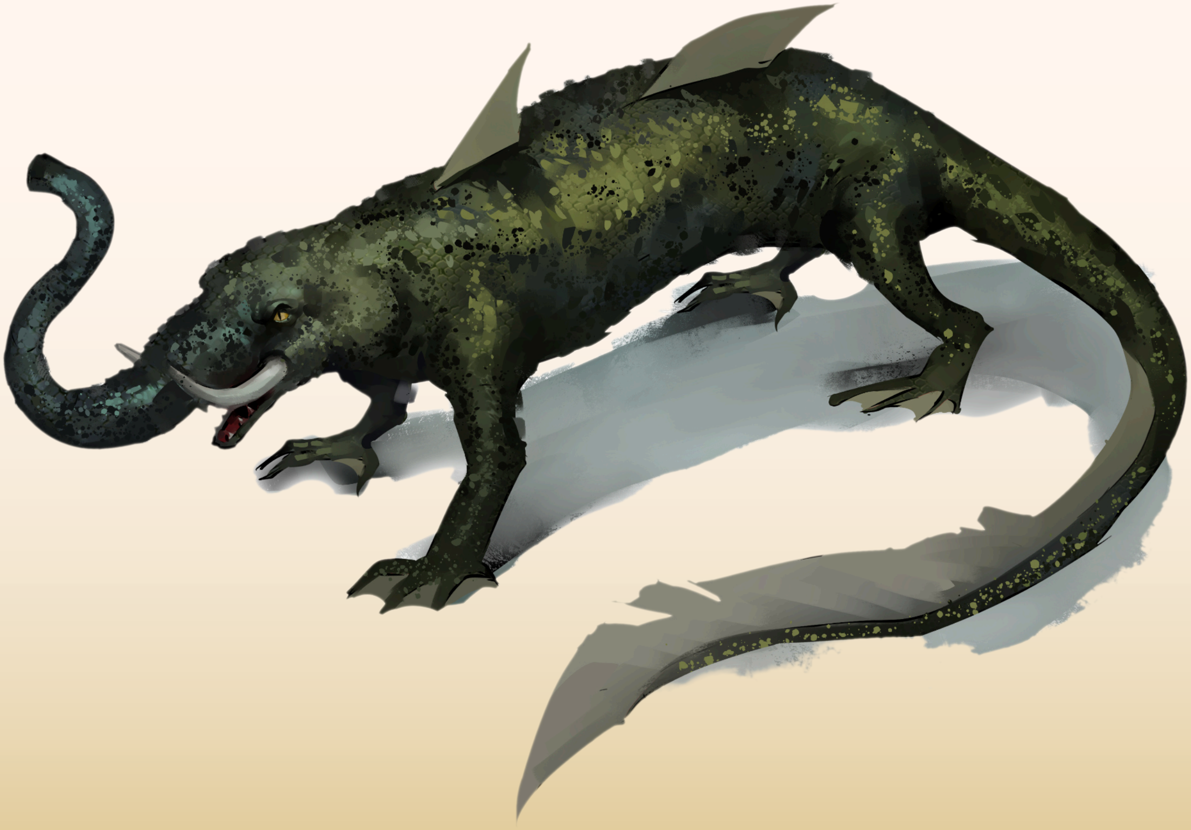
Buck ⤾ DC 18

Speed 20 feet, swim 40 feet.

Melee ◆ ram +7, **Damage** 1d8+3 bludgeoning

Melee ◆ bite +7, **Damage** 1d8+3 piercing

Battering Ram ◆◆ The Makara swims and then makes a ram strike. As long as it moved at least 20 feet, it gains a +1 circumstance bonus to its attack roll. A Large or smaller creature hit by this attack must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be slowed 1 for 1 round.



Makara by Dibyo Shree

PISHACHA

A flesh-eating being of utter evil, one that is eviler than the most wicked asura. The pishacha is a personification of hate, seeking to annihilate and destroy. Their rage can be overt, by tearing apart humans and eating their flesh, or covert, by possessing their minds and causing insanity.

A Devourer on the Prowl: A pishacha is always on the prowl for warm living flesh to consume. But the manner in which the pishacha consumes its prey matters. The more helpless the victim and the more fear evoked by the pishacha, the greater the enjoyment. For this reason, the pishacha prefers to prey on traveling pilgrims, sages in the midst of a puja, and sleeping children.

PISHACHA

Large Undead, Level 7

Perception +11, greater darkvision

Languages Up to three languages

Skills Stealth +12

Str +3, **Dex** +2, **Con** +4, **Int** +2, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

AC 23, **Fort** +15, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13

HP 120 (negative healing); **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

Frightful Presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 60 feet, DC 22

Aura of Death (aura, divine, necromancy) 30 feet, DC 22 Creatures (except undead and fiends) that begin their turn in the aura must make a Fortitude save.

Critical Success: The creature takes no damage.

Success: The creature takes 5 necrotic damage.

Failure: The creature takes 10 necrotic damage.

Critical Failure: The creature takes 15 necrotic damage and is sickened 1.

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ wicked claws +13 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+6 slashing. The target must succeed at a DC 22 Will save or be cursed for 24 hours. While cursed, the target cannot benefit from magical healing. On a successful save, the target becomes immune to this curse for 24 hours.

Melee ◆◆ tongue +13, **Damage** 1d6+6 piercing plus 4d10 negative. The pishacha heals for the amount of negative energy damage dealt.

Timingila

A disputed sea creature of monstrous proportions, people have only heard of the Timingila through stories and songs. Some say it is a concoction of the bored minds of sailors, while others swear they had spotted it. According to legends, this creature is large enough to swallow entire whales. When its gaping mouth is underneath you, it looks as if the entire earth has opened up. No one knows where this creature came from or who created it. Only one thing is known — if you happen to chance upon this creature, you may be breathing your last.

Alien Origin: The true story of this creature is unknown. Some say it came from the great churning, some say it has always existed. Only the gods, in their omniscient minds, know the true story behind the timingila.

Rumored Territory: Most of the spottings and stories of the timingila come from the southern tip of Devabhumi, along the Nimajana Chain. However, some sightings have also been reported in Varuna's Abode.

Timingila

Gargantuan Beast, Level 23

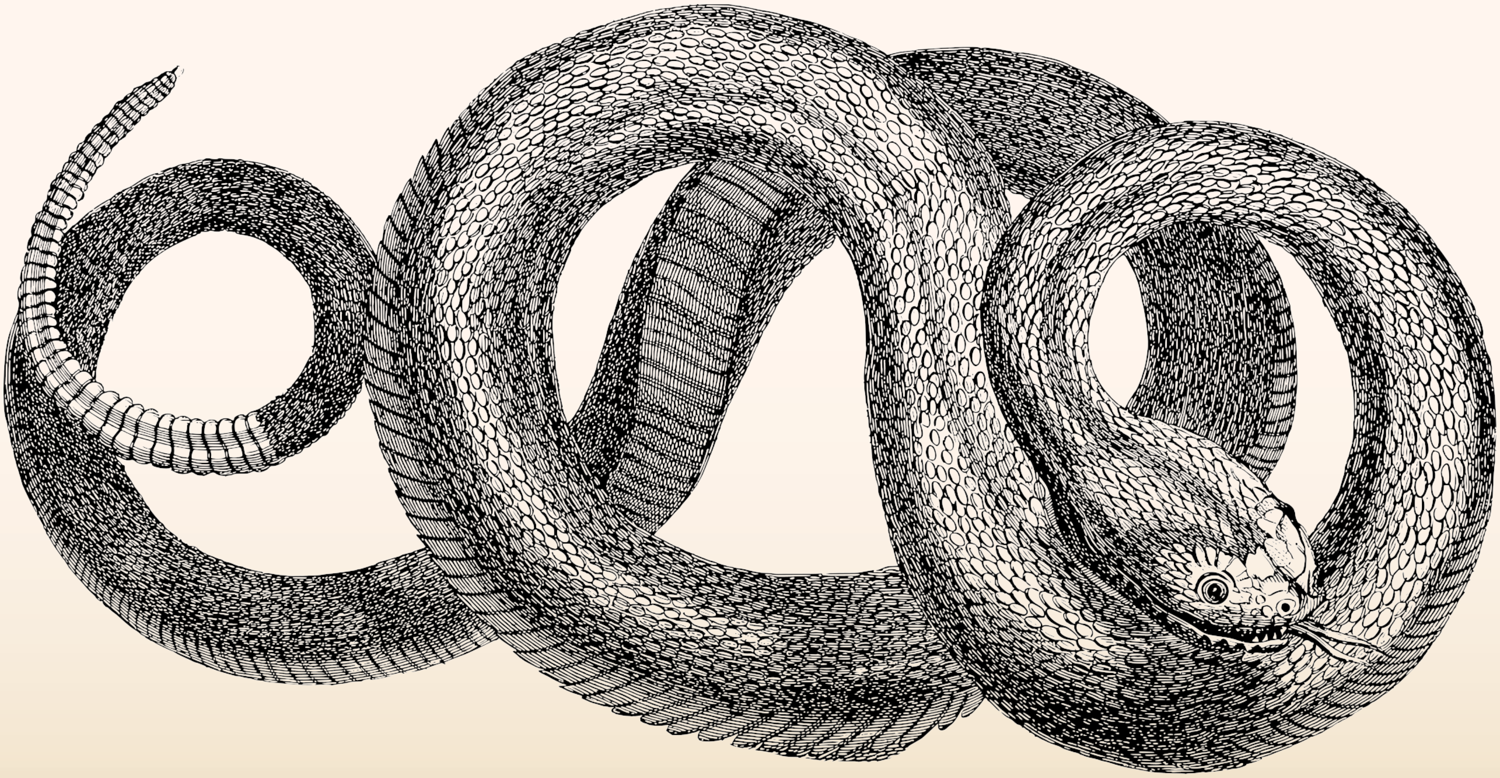
Perception +38; darkvision, wavesense (imprecise) 120 feet
Languages –
Skills Acrobatics +37, Athletics +40
Str +10, **Dex** +6, **Con** +10, **Int** +2, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +5

AC 25, **Fort** +40, **Ref** +36, **Will** +39
HP 460; **Immunities** clumsy, disease, drained, enfeebled, mental, paralyzed, petrified, polymorph;
Resistances fire 20
Frightful Presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 60 feet, DC 35
Attack of Opportunity ⤾

Speed swim 60 ft.
Melee ◆ bite +17 (reach 20 ft.), **Damage** 8d6+16 piercing plus Grab.
Melee ◆ tail +17 (reach 20 ft.), **Damage** 6d6+16 bludgeoning
Swallow Whole ◆ The Timingila swallows one Huge or smaller creature that is currently Grabbed, 8d6+16 bludgeoning plus 8d6 acid, Rupture 40
Tumultuous Force ◆◆ Each creature in the water within 15 feet of the Timingila must make a DC 36 Reflex save.

Critical Success: The creature takes no damage.
Success: The creature takes half of 12d8 bludgeoning damage.
Failure: The creature takes 12d8 bludgeoning damage.
Critical Failure: The creature takes 12d8 bludgeoning damage and is confused.

The Great Churning ◆◆◆ The Timingila violently whips and splashes the ocean around it, causing the ocean around it to surge in massive waves and turbulence.
This ability uses the Tumultous Force attack along with the following added effects:
The Timingila can move up to its speed, without provoking attacks of opportunity.
Any creatures swallowed whole by the Timingila take an additional 8d6 acid damage.
The turbulent water also greater difficult terrain for 1 minute in the affected area.
Any vessels caught in the area are violently rocked, suffering 10d8 bludgeoning damage, forcing all creatures aboard to make a DC 36 Reflex save or fall prone.



Sea Serpent by Gordon Jackson

Uchaishrava

A legendary horse with seven heads that was once used as a mount by Indra. According to sages, this horse was born out of the great churning and is the progenitor of all the horses. After it was no longer needed by Indra when he chose Airavata as his mount, the Uchaishrava (oo-chai-shra-vaa) was given free reign to wander the lands of Devabhumi and graze on the greenest pastures. Many mortals have tried to tame this divine beast, and all have failed except the powerful daitya Mahabali.

Scion of the Great Churning: The Uchaishrava, being born of the great churning, retains a powerful freedom to go wherever it pleases. It has the ability to run, fly, and swim, and can also traverse planes. It is the only beast that can take its rider from the material plane to the planes of Svarga or Patala.

Wild and Free: This beast is notoriously difficult to tame, and to even try is risking one's life. In order to successfully tame it, one must consult either Indra or Mahabali, the only two beings to have successfully tamed it. Only with their help can the Uchaishrava be tamed.

In the Mahabharata, there is a story about an argument between Vinata and Kadru, the two wives of the legendary Sage Kashyapa. The two women were discussing the Uchaishrava. Vinata, the mother of the Garuda race, claimed that the Uchaishrava's tail was white. Kadru, the mother of the Naga race, claimed that the tail was black.

The women placed a bet, where they would track down the Uchaishrava and discover what color its tail is. They agreed that the loser will have to be the servant of the winner. Before the women found the horse, Kadru ordered one of her sons to paint the horse's tail black. When the women saw the horse, Vinata lost and Kadru won, and the former became the servant of the latter.

Uchaishrava

Large Celestial, Level 5

Perception +14, low-light vision

Languages –

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics + 12

Str +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +5, **Int** +0, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

AC 19, **Fort** +13, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 80

Seven Headed: The uchaishrava has seven heads. While it has more than one head, the uchaishrava is immune to the following conditions: blinded, deafened, and stunned.

Buck ⤾ DC 30

Fleet of Foot ⤾ When a creature enters a space adjacent to the uchaishrava, it can use its Hooves attack and move up to half its speed away from that creature. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Speed 80 ft., fly 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee ◆ hooves +13, **Damage** 2d6+4 bludgeoning.

Gallop ◆◆ The Uchaishrava Strides twice. It has a +10-foot circumstance bonus to its Speed during these Strides.

Ulama

Also known as the Devil Bird, this creature makes its home in the jungles of the east and south, hunting for warm blooded mammals in the day. It has a special taste for human meat, feeding on villagers and travelers. Those who have sighted this bird report a bloodcurdling cry followed by a crimson red streak of feathers. Within the blink of an eye, a person disappears, with the bird carrying off its prey.

A Blur of Red: This bird remains in constant motion. Its form cannot be acutely made out as the edges start to blur. Those that have seen it report seeing a blur of red. Due to the irregularity of its form, hunters have failed to hit this bird with any spear or arrow.

Ulama

Medium Beast, Level 4

Perception +12, low-light vision

Languages –

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics +9, Stealth +12

Str +3, **Dex** +5, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

AC 18, **Fort** +10, **Ref** +13, **Will** +17

HP 50

Aerial Ambusher: The Ulama gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls made against creatures that are flat-footed.

Blur: The form of the quick Ulama is blurred. It benefits from the concealed condition. This feature does not work if the Ulama's speed is reduced to 0 (effects such as Grabbed, Paralyzed, Unconscious).

Evasion. When an Ulama rolls a success on a Reflex save, it gets a critical success instead.

Speed fly 40 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee ◆ beak +11, **Damage** 1d8+4 piercing.

Melee ◆ talon +11, **Damage** 2d4+4 slashing.

Hit and Run ◆◆ The Ulama fies up to half its speed, makes two talon strikes, then flies up to half its speed again to return to its original location. The second half of this movement doesn't trigger reactions. Both attacks count toward the Ulama's multiple attack penalty, but the penalty doesn't increase until after it makes both attacks.

YAKKAS

In collaboration with Stephen Sewell

The Yakkas are a race of demonic shapeshifters similar to Asuras, except they are not allowed to directly kill mortals. This is because they do not wish to be punished by the gods for murder, which is considered to be the greatest crime in Devabhumi. Instead, they indirectly harm mortals by spreading sickness and suffering.

Iron Tyrant: Yakkas are ruled by a tyrannical king named Wesamuni that lives in the depths of Patala. This king is rumored to wield a sword that can decapitate multiple creatures in one swing. It is due to the orders of Wesamuni himself that the Yakkas do not kill. But if they are attacked then they will retaliate.

Conflict with Asuras: Despite their similarities, the Yakkas do not get along with the Asuras. The Asuras consider the Yakkas to be pranksters and nuisances, while the Yakkas consider the Asuras impatient. The two groups often skirmish and war with each other, impeding on each other's territory.

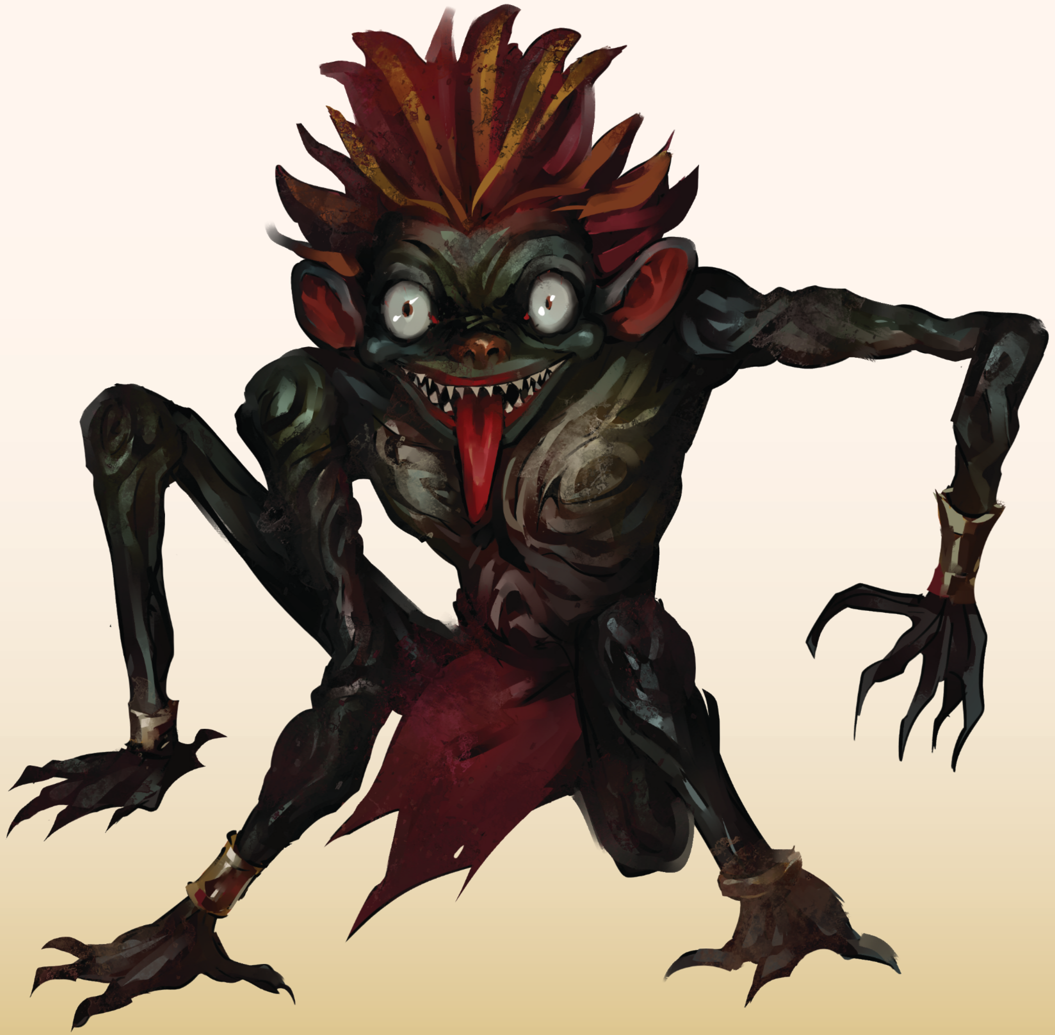
KALU KUMARAYA

Known as the "dark prince" of Yakkas, this incubus-style monster appears as a dark and handsome man who seeks to sate the lusts of those who are lonely at night. Normally he excites his partner to the point of an ecstasy so consuming that the victim seeks to kill themselves to make the sensations stop. In this manner, the Kalu Kumaraya does not directly kill his victims.

REERI YAKKA

Also known as "the blood demon", this creature spreads diseases of the blood and possesses those who are afflicted. The Reeri Yakka resembles a dark red humanoid with a terrifying simian face. It enjoys spreading pain and misery, and can be found whispering taunts and sitting on the chests of sick people.

It avoids detection by shapeshifting into a bird, mouse, or insect. The only sure way to detect a Yakka is through a Divine Sense or equivalent spell. A Yakka can also be warded against by burning incense in the house. The fragrance of the incense is abhorrent to the Yakka.



Yakka by Dibyo Shree

Yakka

Medium Fiend, Level 5

Perception +7, darkvision

Languages Patala, one additional language

Skills Deception +10, Stealth +12

Str +2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +2

AC 20, **Fort** +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9

HP 60

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ claw +10, (agile), **Damage** 2d6+5 slashing

Change Shape ◆ (concentrate, divine, polymorph) The Yakka can change into a small bird, mouse, or insect. It can use this action again to return to its natural shape or transform into a new shape or back into its yakka form. While transformed, its statistics remain the same, but it loses its Claw attack. It reverts to its yakka form if it dies.

Possession (incapacitation, mental, possession) DC 20 Will ◆◆ save. The Yakka attempts to possess an adjacent corporeal creature. This has the same effect as the possession spell with an unlimited duration. If the Yakka took control of the target with Possession, when the Yakka departs, the target has intact and traumatic memories of the time it was possessed.

Kalu Kumaraya

Medium Fiend, Level 6

Perception +9, darkvision

Languages Patala, two additional languages

Skills Deception +15, Diplomacy +15, Society +15, Stealth +12

Str +2, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +5

AC 24, **Fort** +9 **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

HP 80

Captivating Presence (aura, emotion, mental) 10 feet. Any creature in the aura that could be attracted to the Kalu Kumaraya takes a –2 circumstance penalty to checks and DCs to oppose the Kalu Kumaraya mental spells, Deception, and Diplomacy.

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ claw +11 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+5 slashing

Change Shape ◆ (concentrate, divine, polymorph) The Kalu Kumaraya can change into a Small or Medium humanoid. It can use this action again to return to its natural shape or transform into a new humanoid. This doesn't change their speed or their attack and damage modifiers with their strikes, but it might change the damage type their strikes deal (typically to bludgeoning).

Melee ◆◆ maddening kiss +11, **Damage** 3d10 negative

The creature must succeed a DC 22 Will save.

> **Critical Success**: The creature is unaffected, and the Kalu Kumaraya suffers a -2 circumstance penalty to all future Maddening Kiss striks on this creature.
>
> **Success**: The creature is unaffected.
>
> **Failure**: The creature is paralyzed for 1 minute. They can repeat the saving throw at the end of their turns, ending the effect on a success.
>
> **Critical Failure**: The creature is under the effect of the Dominate Spell for 1 hour, and the Kalu Kumaraya can instruct self-destructive commands which the creature must follow.

REERI YAKKA

Medium Fiend, Level 7

Perception +14, darkvision

Languages Patala, one additional language

Skills Deception +10, Stealth +15

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

AC 20, **Fort** +13, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

HP 110; **Immunities** bleed

Attack of Opportunity ⤾

Speed 30 ft.

Melee ◆ claw +13, (agile), **Damage** 2d6+6 slashing plus 2d6 persistent bleed damage. Any creature with persistent bleed damage from a Reeri Yakka's claw attack has weakness 2 to slashing damage until the bleeding is stopped.

Change Shape ◆ (concentrate, divine, polymorph) The Reeri Yakka can change into a small bird, mouse, or insect. It can use this action again to return to its natural shape or transform into a new shape or back into its yakka form. While transformed, its statistics remain the same, but it loses its Claw attack. It reverts to its yakka form if it dies.

Blood Curse ◆◆ (divine, necromancy) The Reeri Yakka targets a living creature within 30 feet and makes the target bleed uncontrollably. The target must succeed a DC 25 Constitution saving throw or suffer one of the effects listed below. On a successful save, the target cannot be affected by this curse for the next 24 hours.

Blood Choke: Blood fills the creature's mouth, preventing any speech or spellcasting with verbal components for 1 minute.

Blood Eye: The creature's eyes well up with bloody tears. The target is blinded for 1 minute.

Heart like Thunder: The target can only hear their thumping heartbeats and the rushing of blood. They are deaf for 1 minute.

Sunset by Yassine Sey

Epilogue

The idea of creating a fantasy setting based on the stories and legends of Ancient India has been occupying my mind for the last two years. The process of drafting this world, creating a project on Kickstarter, and spreading the word has all occurred in a span of less than six months. To say that I am blown away by all of the support and interest I received would be an understatement.

Since the advent of virtual tabletops and the ability to play games with people across the globe, collaborative storytelling has been a method of understanding other viewpoints and bonding with people from across the world. We are just beginning to uncover the tip of the iceberg of stories, legends, and heroes across cultures.

I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to bring to you a sliver of my world, the stories I grew up with, and the culture I grew up with. Some of you may enjoy learning about other cultures, while some of you like the idea of a unique RPG setting inspired by Ancient India. Regardless of what brought you here, I appreciate your willingness to dive into something new. I hope you gained something from this book.

This book is just the start of Devabhumi. I hope that with your help and support, I am able to add to this setting. I plan to create additional monsters, new adventures, deep dives into lore, and much more!

Thank you for accompanying me on this journey, and I hope it serves useful to you in your campaigns!

Khanjan Patel

Texts for Further Reading

Aru Shah and the End of Time by Roshani Chokshi,

Gitanjali by Rabindranath Tagore.

History of Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300 by Romila Thakur.

India: A History by John Keay.

Indian Philosophy by Dr. Radhakrishnan

The Immortals of Meluha by Amith Tripathi.

The Discovery of India by Jawaharlal Nehru.

The Mahabharata, a Mondern Rendering by Ramesh Menon.

The Ramayana of Valmiki by Robert P. Goldman and Sally J. Sutherland.

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